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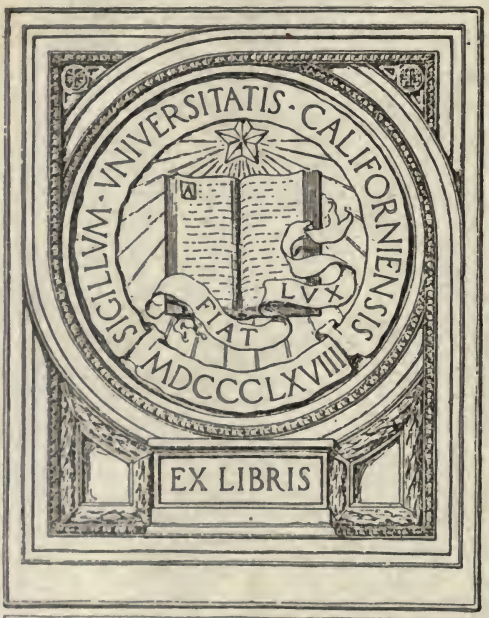

TWO YEARS IN PALESTINE AND SYRIA

MARGARET THOMAS

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

TWO YEARS IN PALESTINE & SYRIA

BY

MARGARET THOMAS

AUTHOR OF

"A SCAMPER THROUGH SPAIN AND TANGIER," "A HERO OF THE WORKSHOP"

ETC. ETC.

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"Each man's happiness depends upon himself and his ability for doing with little. The world has not yet learned the riches of frugality. If a man knows how to spend less than his income, however small that may be, he has the philosopher's stone."—LUIZ DE MORALES.

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IN TOKEN OF SINCERE ADMIRATION

BY

MARGARET THOMAS

INTRODUCTION

To add another to the numerous existing volumes on the fascinating subjects of Syria and the Holy Land might perhaps be thought presumptuous did we not consider that where the harvest has been so plentiful, the gleanings also should be abundant; and that though it be true that the manners and customs which obtained there further back than the days of Abraham have long been thoroughly studied, yet the changing hand of time is laid on its mountains and valleys, its cities and plains, as well as on those of other lands. Civilisation at present advances with such rapid steps, and modern improvements are so indispensable to our manner of living, that the changes which centuries have not been able to effect a few years now suffice to complete. Before the country is transformed, before the Bedouin is replaced by the European colonist, the camel by the railway, the tent by the suburban

villa, and the khân by the hotel, I propose to endeavour to depict by means of pen and pencil a likeness, as it were, of the Palestine and Syria of to-day, and so far as is possible, from a purely secular point of view. The writer of a late description may at least hope to act the part of one of those photographs which it is the fashion to superimpose so as to obtain a representative face; in other words, to be one of the units which serve to create a correct impression of the scenes described. For this purpose, with sketching materials and note-book in hand I set out on my journey.

MARGARET THOMAS.

LONDON, *July* 1899.

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TWO YEARS IN PALESTINE AND SYRIA

CHAPTER I

JAFFA

"Nothing is more difficult than to convey by words what should be understood by actual seeing."

I LEFT Port Said with a friend one day towards the end of March 1895, and after twenty-four hours' rocking on a stormy sea, saw in the early morning light the town of Jaffa, so beautiful when thus seen, so uninteresting on close inspection, rising from the ocean. In the far distance appeared a faint outline, which was Mount Carmel; Cæsarea seemed moving out to meet the waves, the rugged hills of Judæa stood blue against the yellow eastern sky, and on the right was the stretch of sandy shore which leads to Gaza.

Our captain feared we should not be able to

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land because the waves ran, as the saying is, mountains high, and the snowy surf dashed wildly over the black sullen rocks which stand, eternal sentinels, before the port. The vessel would have carried us on to Beyrout had landing not been possible, an event of frequent occurrence during the winter months on this coast, so unprovided with natural bays or artificial shelter. Happily good-fortune attended us, and the gallant Jaffa boatmen, perhaps the best in the world, succeeded in bringing a large boat close to the steamer. I was literally thrown by a man on the ship into the arms of another in the boat, who had to wait till the crest of one of the huge waves carried him within twenty feet of the deck to catch me, the result being that I found myself at the bottom of the boat amid all my belongings (which were thrown in before), saturated with salt and fresh water, for it was beginning to rain heavily.

The poor Russian and Coptic pilgrims on the deck, who had looked during the voyage like animated bales of merchandise, had a bad time of it; many were seen hanging to the side of the ship by their hands till a wave bore the boat within leaping distance. They

had taken, as they always do, deck passages, supplying themselves with food, and had been already twice between Port Said and Beyrout without being able to effect a landing; their provisions were exhausted, and they had had to depend on what the captain could spare them.

The Jaffa boatmen are fine stalwart fellows, and their boats are good; twelve of them, two to each oar, soon rowed us through the ten-feet passage in the rocks, over one big wave and down the next, crying as they rose to their feet with every stroke, "Ya Allah! ya Mahomet!" A dragoman *enlivened* the rough journey with an account of how seventy lives had lately been lost in an attempt to land at that storm-ridden port. However, we got safely on shore, more fortunate than the passengers who arrived the day before us, and had had to go on to Beyrout, to come back and try their luck at Jaffa a second time. How glad we were to get into a comfortable hotel and let the sun and air dry our soaked garments, the reader will easily imagine. There are no fires available for this purpose in all Syria.

Jaffa, rising pyramidically from the bluest of seas, has a fair outward appearance, which is

belied on examination of its dirty streets and bazaars, where, if you are not ankle-deep in dust, you are up to the tops of your boots in mud. The gardens by which it is almost surrounded are marvellous for beauty, rich as they are in orange, lemon, apricot, and olive trees, besides which numerous other specimens of subtropical vegetation flourish, such as palms, acacias, cactuses, and oleanders. Fifty years ago there were very few houses here. The population is as mixed as usual in seaside places, Jews mustering in great force, while the Germans have a flourishing colony called Sarona, numbering two hundred and seventy souls, close by, where good wine is produced. The climate is excessively hot, the sirocco or khamsin often blowing.[1] There is a splendid beach, but no accommodation for bathers, men and women bathing from the beach.

Jaffa contains no antiquities. The so-called house of Simon the Tanner is now represented by a small unfinished mosque, Mohammedans never losing an opportunity of seizing upon

[1] The khamsin is a hot wind bearing sand and dust with it from the desert. It is so called because it blows for fifty days, from the Arabic word for fifty.

places revered by Christians. As is the case with many of the sacred sites, the tomb of Tabitha is migratory, or is shown in several different places, on one of which stands a fine church.

Near the shore may still be seen the funnel of a Russian steamer rising above the waves, the sole remains of a wreck which occurred three years ago, when three hundred lives were lost on this rude, pitiless coast. Why a decent harbour is not made at Jaffa it is difficult to understand, except that the one explanation for all evils in this evil-ridden country is, that it is governed by Turks.

Gazing on the sullen waves I recall to memory that near here Andromeda was chained to a rock in order that she might be devoured by a huge sea-monster, but was delivered by Perseus; and that from Jaffa, Jonah set out on his memorable voyage (see Jonah i. 3). Jaffa is one of the oldest towns in the world, being anciently a Phœnician colony, it is mentioned on the Egyptian monuments; and here, where mythology and Christianity meet, we can also reflect on the close connection between Judæa and Egypt, from which latter country the traveller still most probably

reaches these shores. The mysterious religion of Egypt, the refined mythology of the Greeks, Judaism, and Christianity, have a common meeting-ground in Jaffa.

A Russian baron has planted a most luxuriant garden here, where all kinds of tropical plants flourish, yielding a wealth of blossom and almost overpowering strength of perfume; he has placed in it innumerable parrots and macaws of the most gaudy plumage. He wished to present this ideal garden to the town, and freely allowed people to walk in it, but a paternal government soon showed signs of seizing it; the baron, therefore, wisely determined to keep this little paradise for himself, and has closed the gates to the public. He possesses also a small museum of Syrian antiquities well worthy of inspection; among the treasures are shields of arms, most skilfully carved, which belonged to Crusaders, a few inscriptions in Hebrew and Greek on the same slab, bronze mice, evidently *ex voto* offerings after the plague of these animals, some very inferiorly executed busts torn from the pillars of Palmyra, and two of much better workmanship from Cæsarea.

An illustration of the Arabs' treatment of disease occurred while we were here. They usually burn

the affected part with red-hot irons, or employ the aid of a magician, but they have other means equally inefficacious.

A Jewish youth was persuaded by his mother that he had the gift of snake-charming. A man had transfixed a snake or viper, I could not learn which, with a hayfork, and the unfortunate youth, willing to exercise his supposed powers, asked him to let the reptile go, and when he did so, immediately seized it by the tail. It turned and bit him between the thumb and first finger. The Arabs present killed three pigeons, cut them in halves, and applied the bleeding portions to the wound one after another. The account says the pigeons turned to worms at once. They also gave the patient milk to drink in which the horn of a horned snake had been dipped, and then they carried him to his mother's house. There he was treated by European medical men; but in spite of their endeavours he died in the evening, and was buried next morning at four o'clock.

Sharks are plentiful at Jaffa, and bathing beyond a certain limit dangerous, both on account of them and the heavy ground swell. Two or three lives are lost in bathing every year. It is told of a priest who was a strong swimmer, that a shark

bit off his foot; he struggled bravely to the shore, and, it is added, tied up the limb himself before help could reach him, and so preserved his life.

The Custom-House and Post-Office are most tyrannically administered; duty is demanded on almost everything, and letters and newspapers are frequently forfeited. A packet containing wedding-cake was opened as being suspicious, and in the case of any news being in the papers which is considered prejudicial to Turkish interests, they are burnt.

Nothing can be conceived more atrocious than the administration of justice (?) throughout the country—you can get as many witnesses as you like to swear to anything for a bishlik (sixpence) each; indeed, they stand outside the Serai or Court House waiting to be hired, and he who can afford to give the largest amount of backsheesh wins the day. Backsheesh is the first word the traveller hears on landing, the last when he leaves; it is lisped by the tiniest babe in the street when he sees a stranger, and muttered by the old man tottering to the grave. Morning, noon, and night, from the city as from the desert, arises throughout Syria the one unvarying cry of "Backsheesh! backsheesh!"

A Pasha appointed governor of a new district may perhaps commence some useful work, such as making a road or building a bridge; but when his party goes out of power he goes with it, and a successor is appointed, who, to signalise his rule, commences quite a different undertaking—the road is left unfinished, the bridge remains *in statu quo*, and destruction soon commences its work. And so decay and ruin are the general features of the country.

I afterwards had occasion to visit the town twice, but did not alter my first impressions of Jaffa the Beautiful.

CHAPTER II

IN THE TRAIN

"I love to rest in leafy lanes
Remote from business, strife, and flurry,
But don't despise such things as trains
Or telegraphs when in a hurry."
—ARTHUR PATCHETT MARTIN.

AT 1.45 P.M. every day the rickety little train steams out of Jaffa station, the line running through the orange groves and cornfields of the Plain of Sharon. This, the only train in Palestine, takes six hours to do the fifty-four miles which lie between Jaffa and Jerusalem, winding slowly along the sides of hills, and going with almost equal deliberation over plains. It was a cause of great indignation among the Arabs two years ago when it was first started; they attempted to upset it, and would cross the line with that quiet dignity which is peculiar to them, thinking the train would stop for their convenience. This state of things could not be allowed to continue, and at last an engine-driver deliberately ran into one of their camels

and cut it to pieces; they made better haste for the future. To-day even it is a favourite recreation of the Turkish ladies to go near the station at Jerusalem, and squat for hours beside the line to see the train come in. It only makes one journey each way a day, and, needless to add, does not pay.

The motion is so disagreeable, that many persons even accustomed to travelling are made ill by it. The first-class is barely decent, the second does not exist, and the third has wooden seats all round, and a bench down the middle for the accommodation of such native ladies and gentlemen as prefer to travel sitting like tailors. The first-class has also a separate compartment for ladies of the harem, at the door of which the conductor knocks most respectfully when he wishes to collect the tickets.

One of the first stations is Lydda, a village literally embowered in olive-trees, and its prickly-pear hedges remind one of the south of Italy. Here I saw camels ploughing, and a woman guiding a plough with a cow and donkey yoked together to draw it. Now and then Bedouin may be seen watching their flocks, and occasionally an encampment of their

dark tents is visible. Camels, cattle, donkeys, and the beautiful brown and yellow sheep of Syria, with broad, flat tails, graze peacefully together, while noble-looking Arabs, who seem to understand the brute creation better than they do Christians, watch or sleep beside them. How they must wonder at the train rushing among them! but they never pretend to, their principle being never to be astonished at anything, *nil admirari.*

The line passes through the valley of Ajalon, after which the scenery becomes very wild and rocky, the hills being round at the top and cut up into those terraces at the making of which the ancient Jews were so adept. Ramleh, with its celebrated tower, looked pleasant in the afternoon light. The name Ramleh signifies sand in Arabic, and is, to say the least of it, appropriate. The tower, according to Mohammedan tradition commemorates the forty companions of the Prophet, according to the Christians forty Christian martyrs. However, *chacun à son goût,* all we have to do with it for the moment is that it is a very elegant and picturesque specimen of Saracenic architecture, built by the Omayyed Khalif Suleiman in 716.

Just after passing Ramleh a small village is to be seen on the left, and we asked some Arabs in the carriage its name. Without answering the question directly they informed us that they lived there themselves, and that a year and a half ago they and the other inhabitants *got rid* of a German who went to live among them because he flirted with their wives. He was found murdered by the roadside, and, they added significantly, that six or seven women died immediately after! We ultimately ascertained that this tale was perfectly true.

Then the shaking train winds in and out amid the wild Judæan hills and villages the colour of the rock they are built on, always perched on a site selected with a view to being perpetually besieged. These very hills have seen the mighty struggles of the Maccabees and the later carnages of Saracens and Crusaders, but at present all is peaceful, and the inhabitants seem wrapped in imperturbable ignorance and apathy.

At Artûf the English attempted to form an agricultural colony, but it has failed, and the land is now in the hands of Jews. It remains to be seen what they can do with the desolate

space amid surrounding hills, with only a few red-tiled cottages thereon. How difficult it is for Europeans to do anything in Palestine an incident which happened here will prove.

A vineyard consisting of six thousand vines was planted by the English colonists. Soon after the cuttings began to show leaf it was observed that they died; a mark was put round each stem close to the ground by a person who knew something of Arab trickery. Thus it was discovered that these people came at night and lifted each cutting about two inches out of the ground, so that all were killed. The motive was to keep the land waste as pasturage for their cattle.

It is rather a shock to the traveller when at last he sees in the evening light a small modern station, with over the door the word "Jerusalem," painted. Fortunately for sentiment this station is a mile from the city, and if you cannot catch a glimpse of the sacred walls from it, at least the sight of the station from the city does not offend you.

And here begins the quarrelling, shouting, pushing, screaming, pulling, swearing, and striking which is the inevitable experience of every

traveller who sets foot in an Oriental city. We fought our way into a carriage, but it could go no farther than to the Jaffa gate, so there our luggage was taken possession of by two porters, who carried it on their shoulders by means of straps round their heads, and so in rain, darkness, and mire we made our way through the Holy City to the hospice where we intended to stay. It is well to remind the reader that the different Catholic countries long ago established hospices under the care of different religious communities in Jerusalem, for the accommodation, at a small charge, of the numerous pilgrims who resort there. When they are not full, travellers are received on payment as in a pension.

We followed the atâls or porters through the lampless streets under low archways, down passages so narrow the boxes could hardly pass, up greasy steps, and amid sleeping dogs, who barely woke, when touched, to growl and go to sleep again, with the rain remorselessly pattering down upon us, till we reached our destination, and so we learned nothing about Jerusalem that night, slumbering dark and gloomy in the arms of its all-surrounding hills.

CHAPTER III

JERUSALEM—AN HOUR IN JERUSALEM

SONNET

"Jerusalem upon her holy stone
Sleeps 'mid ten thousand tombs all desolate;
Wild winds sob round her and bewail her fate,
And, like the spirit of her Prophets, moan
For Zion's daughter, poor, debased, and lone;
Without her walls the screeching vultures wait,
Foxes and jackals prowl insatiate,
Her hills resounding to their monotone.
The wandering Hebrew treads her tortuous ways,
The Moslem in her Temple precinct stands,
Her vineyards yield their gifts to alien hands,
Her vales re-echo to the Bedouin's steeds,
Upon her hills the swarthy Arab strays.
Low art thou fallen, Mother of the creeds."

—MARGARET THOMAS.

JERUSALEM is a city more difficult to describe than any other I have ever attempted. Before trying to do so in detail, I will give a rough outline of its more prominent features as seen in a walk of about an hour's duration; and when the first impressions are arranged, we can fill the details up at leisure, though at the risk, perhaps, of a little repetition. To see and know Jerusalem is in itself an education in biblical litera-

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ture ; nevertheless, the sense of being on the site of such tremendous events as those recorded in the Scriptures is at first too overpowering to allow of one's taking anything resembling a dispassionate view of the scenes in which they were enacted. A little later the mind grows clearer as the preconceived impressions become dim in the presence of a perhaps somewhat disappointing reality, and the mind can then begin to seize and assimilate the actualities which surround it. The subject, however, grows more and more enthralling the deeper one penetrates, and the last and truest impression which in time replaces the glamour of the first is, if less romantic, truer, and therefore more permanent. The feeling which Renan so beautifully expresses will probably be that of every thinker during his sojourn in the Holy City: "Toute cette histoire qui à distance semble flotter dans la nuage d'un monde sans réalité prit ainsi un corps, une solidité qui m'étonnent. L'accord frappant des textes et des lieux, la merveilleuse harmonie de l'ideal evangelique avec le paysage qui lui servit de cadre furent pour moi une révélation."

CHAPTER IV

JERUSALEM—THE CITY

It is said "no one finds more in a picture than he brings to it himself," and the remark holds good not only of pictures, but of books, persons, and places. It follows that I, in treating of Jerusalem, of necessity record just the simple impressions and experiences of an artist, and not the profound reflections of an archæologist, the conclusions of a historian, or the romantic visions of a poet.

Jerusalem, called by the Moslems "El Kuds," the Holy, is built on two hills, divided unequally by the Tyropœon valley, now scarcely recognisable as a depression, being nearly filled up by the accumulated rubbish of two thousand years. Beyond the valleys of Kidron and Hinnom, which surround the city on all but the north side, rise still higher hills, very stony and barren in appearance; whichever way you look hill still succeeds hill, till they are lost at last in the horizon. It is

entirely enclosed by magnificent walls of a fine yellow colour, built by Suleiman the Magnificent in 1536. They are battlemented, and spring in some places from the natural rock, which is visible; here and there are medallions with Arabic inscriptions thereon and the character called Solomon's seal. At the south-east corner some huge blocks of stone may be seen, which are probably remains of the wall of the Temple. The grey marks observable on the walls are due to a shower of mud which fell two years ago, and which no subsequent rain has succeeded in washing off. The country around is very wild, in a quarter of an hour's walk you may plunge into perfect solitude and desolation; foxes and jackals sometimes prowl close to the city. The hills close to Jerusalem are many of them covered with Moslem tombs, among which wander innumerable pariah dogs.

The walls are pierced with seven gates. 1. The Jaffa gate, the best known to travellers, as they enter there on arriving by the train, and the new strangers' quarter lies immediately without it. 2. The Zion gate, leading to the small suburb of Neby Daud, or Tomb of David. 3. The Moghrebin or Dung gate, hardly high enough for a horseman to pass under. 4. St. Stephen's gate,

leading to the Kidron valley. 5. Herod's gate, which strangers should not enter unaccompanied by an inhabitant, as it leads immediately to the native quarter. I imagine one gets a clearer idea of what ancient Jerusalem was like here than anywhere else. Narrow-paved lanes, in many places arched over, small doors leading to court-yards containing more arches and elegant mush-rabîyeh windows, are its chief characteristics. The course of the Tyropœon valley, which runs from the Damascus gate towards the south, may very well be traced in this quarter. 6. The Damascus gate, the most beautiful of all, said to be on the site of that entered by the Crusaders when they first captured Jerusalem; it is decidedly Saracenic in style. 7. The New gate, an unlovely entrance, pierced of late years. There is also the Golden gate, which is closed.

Jerusalem is divided into four quarters—Jewish, Moslem, Armenian, and Christian.

The genuine Jerusalem houses are low, and have flat stone roofs, with low domes in the centre to catch as much rain-water as possible; of course they are surrounded with parapets to retain it until it flows into the cistern, a precaution essential in a city dependent for its entire water-supply

on rain which falls only during the few winter months. The Turkish houses have mostly parapets, in which drain-pipes are built horizontally, so that the women of the harem, who take their airing on the roof, may see through them and not be seen. The rooms are usually built round a court, one door only, and perhaps a few windows very high up, facing the street. The Jews' houses are the filthiest tenements ever seen; the doors are not high enough to enter without stooping (a precautionary measure in case of disturbances), and a wall is generally built partly across the entrance passage, preventing passers-by from getting even a glimpse of the interior.

The streets are of the narrowest description, in many places arched over; some are but a series of steps, in rainy weather almost impassable on account of the mud. They are seldom cleansed, and then in a very perfunctory sort of way. The frequent passing of camels and donkeys with loads of refuse, stones, or even butchers' meat, renders it necessary to be circumspect when walking. The shops are very small, as is usual in Eastern cities; some are caves cut in the rock, others partly underground. A sort of cupboard, with shelves round it to hold the goods, most

frequently does duty as a shop. In it, on a kind of counter on which his wares are exposed, the merchant sits all day, having hoisted himself over the counter by a rope hanging from the ceiling. Here he smokes his nargileh, says his prayers, and gossips with his friends, who sit on the pavement in front under the shade of the tattered canvas suspended from house to house across the street.

In odd nooks and corners the visitor comes unexpectedly across beautiful specimens of Saracenic architecture, such as fountains, windows, doorways and wells, but the general character of the city is mediæval and massive. The soil is so rocky, that to build a house you have only to dig out the necessary stone on the spot; while to make a garden, earth must be brought from a distance in baskets, carried by donkeys at great expense. In some places the original Jerusalem lies 135 feet below the surface of the present town; it is said that eight cities, one over another, lie buried in the mass of rubbish.

A walk through the smaller streets is a thing to remember; they are about as wide as a dining-table, slippery with refuse, and, being covered over in many places, devoid of sun and fresh air.

The shops are dark, and down the murky thoroughfare crowd dirty people, carrying meat, fish, rubbish, &c., &c.; amid them parade solemn donkeys, quite unconscious that their burdens are wider than themselves, and every passer-by is shouting, quarrelling, or screaming. The smell is so offensive, that many people decline, very naturally, to make a profound study of these streets.

Modern Jerusalem is extending far outside the Jaffa gate, where are the shops chiefly patronised by Christians, the principal hotels, and the new settlements of the Jews. One of these last is known as the Tin Box colony, the tenements being constructed in great part of petroleum oil-cans hammered out. The result is not picturesque. As a detail, great use is made of these tins, in which oil is imported from Russia; bottles, watering-pots, stoves, flower-pots, and all sorts of drinking and cooking utensils are made from them.

So little as twenty years ago Jerusalem, wrapped in her venerable walls, stood proudly alone amid the savage hills; now she is surrounded by a mass of mean-looking little houses, rendered necessary by the largely-increased population.

There are two Post-Offices, Turkish and Austrian, and it is necessary to inquire at both before feeling quite sure about letters; or, possibly, they may have been lost or forfeited at Jaffa from political motives. Newspapers are frequently confiscated, especially if there is any news in them concerning Armenia. It is safest to put cuttings on this subject in envelopes and send them as letters. During rough weather the mail is often delayed for a fortnight or more. Telegrams are still more uncertain. On reaching Beyrout they are sent to Haifa or Jaffa by ship, so that a person travelling on horseback may easily perform the feat of reaching Jerusalem before his own telegram.

The market is well worth a visit. Arabs in their different costumes, camels laden with melons, grapes, and other picturesque objects, donkeys carrying every imaginable kind of load, women with pots, vegetables, perhaps a tiny gazelle in a basket on their heads, sometimes with one child sitting on their shoulders and another behind, Jews marketing for themselves, and gaily dressed servants for their masters, make up a scene of life and colour not easily matched elsewhere.

One of the greatest puzzles in the place is the

currency; English sovereigns and French napoleons pass, but no other foreign coins. A percentage is always charged on small change, even for purchases made in the shops; in many streets men may be seen seated before little glass cases full of money ready to sell change. There are the Turkish pound, a fine piece of gold money seldom seen; medjidiehs varying in value in nearly every town from three shillings and fourpence to three shillings and ninepence, quarter medjidiehs; bishliks worth sixpence; piastres, varying from twopence to threepence in value; parâs, too small for anything practical, about one hundred making a quarter of a medjidieh; kubbuks, equal to forty parâs; and metalliks, little pieces of metal worth ten parâs each, the coin most commonly in use.

Jerusalem has neither street lamps, policemen, postmen, nor newspapers; people who go out at night are ordered to carry lanterns under a heavy penalty. The keeping of three successive Sundays—Mohammedan, Jewish, and Christian—leads to much loss of time, for the lazily-disposed observe all three.

The climate is exceedingly salubrious. Being high, 2550 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, Jerusalem is cooler than much of the

surrounding country; in fact, people flock to it in summer to escape the great heat of the plains. September is perhaps the most unhealthy month, but the thermometer only averages 80° indoors, and though the streets are hot and dusty, the cool wind which prevails tempers the heat and renders it bearable. Though at mid-day the thermometer may reach a very high grade in the sun, the evenings and mornings are always cool and delightful. In Australia one of the worst troubles of the climate is that the intense heat of day finds no abatement in the torturing nights; in Syria one is always sure of a tolerably cool night even after the hottest day. A great drawback is that in spring the wind is nearly always high, one day a khamsin may blow, the next a storm from a cold quarter; even during the same day summer and winter may be experienced as they struggle together for supremacy. The difference between the temperature in the sun and in the shade is very marked, sometimes so much as 30°.

About September the water stored in private cisterns comes to an end, and people are then dependent on that stored in the larger reservoirs, such as those of churches and monasteries. Picturesquely dressed men may be seen drawing it

in leathern buckets, and conveying it in black goatskins by means of donkeys in every direction. In 1895 the latter rain fell on the 16th of May, and the fine weather lasted unbroken till October 8th, when, after a wild and windy night, some heavy showers fell, and the trees, which had looked grey with dust, suddenly assumed a brilliant green ; the change was especially remarkable in the graceful foliage of the pepper-trees, with their drooping masses of red berries. On October the 14th heavy rain fell, but not enough to wash out the cisterns, which is always the use to which the first rain-water is applied.

By the middle of November, in 1895, water in Jerusalem became scarce, costing those whose cisterns had run dry two piastres a skin. Fortunately on the night of the 15th heavy rain fell. The morning after, looking towards the mountains of Moab as they rise above the Dead Sea, a wonderful sight presented itself. A dense white mist rose in majestic masses from the water, half concealing the mountains, which were purple while the sky was orange and blue. The sunset of the same day was the most gorgeous ever dreamed of by the most imaginative artist. Olivet and Scopus were tinted as

with fire, and every dome and minaret in the Holy City seemed aflame; in the hollows floated dove-grey and rosy mist. A dense mass of fiery cumulus clouds rolled up from the west, flakes of living light floating below their under-edges, the rest of the sky being streaked with orange and pale blue. That night a tremendous thunderstorm came on; the lightning was so vivid as to make the summits of Mount Scopus and the Mount of Olives clearer than sunlight ever did, while thunder muttered without a second's cessation from hill to hill, from hollow to hollow. It seemed but right that as summer had come in with a similar convulsion of nature, so also it should depart.

Skies of the same kind occurred for some evenings after this, and rain and clouds alternated with hot sunshine. Immense masses of vapour rose at times from the Dead Sea like steam from a caldron, completely obscuring the Moabite hills, the thermometer reaching 103° in the sun.

The dust in the roads turned to mud, the hills suddenly clothed themselves with a vesture of green, crocuses thrust their little pink heads up between the stones, succeeded in turn

by their delicate white sisters with yellow centres, and massive bunches of squill leaves burst through the softened soil. By the 11th of December eight inches of rain had fallen, and once a little snow. The thermometer, however, sometimes marked 62° in the sun, and the weather became delightful for excursions. In this month ploughing and sowing commences, the sower carrying the seed in the skirts of his garment, and scattering it on the ground, which is afterwards simply ploughed over.

The olive harvest is also gathered then. The trees are thrashed with long sticks till all the fruit falls; it is collected by women, who carry it away on their heads. Every tree and all crops are taxed in kind; collecting this tax is a cause of great cruelty and corruption. Every animal is also taxed, and the taxes are still farmed out as they were in the days of the New Testament.

The inhabitants are of many different creeds and nationalities: native-born Syrians and stationary Arabs (by far the most numerous); the Turks, the dominant race; Jews, who migrate yearly in large and larger numbers to the land of their forefathers' nationality; Bedouin, who

have no fixed habitation, but pitch their tents wherever they find a spot of land on which to sow a scanty crop or pasturage for their cattle, and the heterogeneous mixture of natives of other countries drawn hither by religious motives. The Mohammedans far outnumber all other religious denominations; next come Greek Christians, Armenians, Latins, Copts, and finally a small number of Protestants. Of these the Latins perform the most valuable work in converting the Mohammedans. As the author of "A Naturalist in Mid-Africa" remarks, "they understand that manual, mental, and spiritual training go together, and what is more important, they really love their flocks, and strive to be their real friend in every possible way."

The Church of St. George, which was consecrated by the Bishop of Salisbury in October 1898, is situated just opposite the Tombs of the Kings. England, like other nations, must have an ecclesiastical establishment in Jerusalem (the old Christ Church is only a mission church), and for this purpose has acquired a large block of ground. Huge walls, capable of resisting a street attack, contain a square courtyard, at one side of which is the church and on another

the bishop's residence and clergy house. In digging the foundation for these buildings two ancient tombs were discovered, one upright, ornamented with frescoes, the other containing two small skeletons. Some Byzantine gold coins and a piece of very fine mosaic are among the other finds on the site of the Anglican College. Truly Jerusalem is *par excellence* the city of tombs.

The Church of the Redeemer, opened by the German Emperor with so much pomp and ceremony during his recent visit to Palestine, is close to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and is built on the site of the Muristân (hospital for lunatics), once the property of the Knights of St. John, and presented to the late Emperor Frederick by the Sultan. The architect has tried to reproduce the old building, of which vast ruins still remain, and has succeeded in restoring and making use of the original Gothic doorway, with the signs of the zodiac in high relief on it. The huge tower is imposing, but is crowned by an ugly pyramidal roof. The interior is very elaborately decorated with colour, and a fine peal of bells has lately been hung. As Mohammedans object very

strongly to bells as a call to worship, this shows an advance in toleration. The Christians were at first compelled to use wooden planks, suspended and beaten with sticks, such as may still be seen in the Armenian convent and Greek monastery on Mount Quarantania for this purpose.

The plot of ground presented to the Kaiser by the Sultan, known as "La Dormition de la Sainte Vierge," lies between the Zion gate and Neby Daud. It is the last "holy" site *identified.*

CHAPTER V

JERUSALEM—THE JEWS

"Faithless and perverse generation."—MATT. xvii. 17.

THE Jewish population of Jerusalem, which ten years ago amounted to 10,000, now exceeds 47,000 souls according to the latest and most authentic estimates, and this number is almost daily increasing. Judged by these figures, the tax imposed by the Turkish Government on Jews landing in Palestine exercises very little effect in diminishing their influx, aided as it is by European charity.

The Jew in Jerusalem does not present altogether the characteristics we associate with his appearance in England.

In his own country the Jew is generally fair, with a peculiar pink complexion, small nose, and narrow, stooping shoulders. He is tall, slender, and delicate looking. His dress is a long robe girt in at the waist, over which a coat or gaberdine is worn—at festival times of

the most gaudy hue imaginable, rivalling the brilliance of the gayest flowers or plumage of the brightest bird. Plush or velvet coats of emerald green, bright purple, pink, radiant yellow, and deep crimson are the most common, and over the little knitted white skull-cap, which they all affect from boy to man, they wear a flat round velvet hat heavily trimmed with fur, below which the other headgear peeps ungracefully. On the hottest Sabbaths the Jew still keeps to his inappropriate fur cap. The stricter Jews wear long locks of hair hanging down each side of the face.

The women dress as nearly as they can in European fashion, but may always be distinguished by their unfailing attachment to the most gaudy colours, worn without the least regard to taste, and the quantity of jewellery they contrive to hang about their persons. Out of doors they cover their heads with a shawl, or, like the Turkish women, wear a long white garment completely concealing the person, but they do not veil their faces.

Anxious to secure the type of a young Jewess for one of my pictures, I asked the mistress of the Jewish Girl's Day School to allow me to

sketch one of her pupils. I borrowed a few yellow beads which were on the neck of the Christian teacher (also a Jewess), and a white handkerchief from another girl, and put them on the throat of the child I had chosen to see the effect. It was then arranged that I should commence work the next day. But when I arrived I found one of the pupils (jealous perhaps that she was not the chosen one), had told the Rabbis that I had dressed the child up as Christ, and was about to worship her. The Rabbis told the mother that the mere act of painting her (photographing they called it in their ignorance) would make the child a Christian, and that if she permitted it to be done they would turn her out of her house and burn it. She appeared on the scene in hot haste, had beaten the girl, and said "Not for a hundred pounds would she allow her to be painted." She threatened to withdraw her child from the school, and watched most narrowly till I was safely off the premises, a move I hastened to make for fear of compromising the most obliging teacher. Such are the obstacles to painting in Jerusalem at the present day.

One day I had a long conversation with a Jew as to his religious ideas, a subject about which little seems known, and now give the result for what it is worth.

Jews, he said, believed in transmigration. The feet of a dying Jew are turned towards the door, a glass of water, a towel, and two candles are placed near him, because the soul is supposed to return and wash and dry itself. The soul of every Jew goes to hell for eleven months—if he has been wicked, for thousands of years; but by prayer he is helped to Paradise, and the great reason why Jews wish for a son, and many divorce wife after wife till they have one, is that he may pray them more quickly into heaven. When the wife of Sir Moses Montefiore died, he gave £20 to every synagogue in England that the priests might pray for her, and a still larger sum to those in Jerusalem. Among the Jews in Russia, Germany, Poland, &c., tin boxes are nailed to the walls of their houses labelled "for Jerusalem," and into this money is put on certain occasions, such as if one recovers from an illness, or has some piece of good fortune. This is collected by the Rabbis every two or three months and sent to Jerusa-

lem, where it is administered by the Rabbis to rich and poor alike, lest the poor should be ashamed to take it. This revenue is sometimes farmed out, and certain Jews become rich in this way, sharing the division of the money, and receiving alms for saying prayers for those who are unable to visit the Holy Land themselves. Most clever young Jews pass their lives in studying the Talmud; the less clever are taught trades, which is considered a disgrace. Rich men seek these clever Jews as husbands for their daughters, and maintain them, their wives and children; or they travel from family to family and live, as it is supposed they go to heaven sooner than other people and have some influence there. Women have souls, but infinitely inferior to those possessed by men—evidently a negligeable quantity.

When I was in Jerusalem last year a Jewess died in the hospital belonging to the London Jews' Society, where she had been kindly received and taken care of when her co-religionists declined to help her. The Jews refused to bury her as she died in a Christian house, and the English applied to their Consul to know how to act in the matter. He in turn went to the Turkish

Governor of Jerusalem, who replied that if the Jews did not perform this office, the Turks would. Accordingly he sent a stretcher and four bearers, together with a number of soldiers, and they carried the body to a waste piece of land on the Jericho road belonging to the English, dug a grave and buried it. But the Jews assembled in their thousands and stoned the soldiers, who drove them back with whips. Altogether it was a lively scene from where we saw it, and many people were hurt, for stones are very handy in Jerusalem. It was afterwards ascertained that the Jews tried at night to steal the body in order to throw it into the valley of Jehosaphat to be eaten by dogs. Many of them were imprisoned by the Turkish Government on account of this affair, and bribes to be set free were paid to the amount of £150.

Jews are divided into four sects: (1) Sephardim or Spanish, perhaps the best type; (2) Ashkenazim, German, Russian, and North European generally; (3) Yemenites, who come from the depths of Arabia, and have only been known in Jerusalem the last nine years;[1] and (4) Karaites, who

[1] The Yemenites profess to have taken no part in the Crucifixion, their ancestors having left Palestine before that event.

may be called Protestant Jews. The first three are orthodox Jews, accepting both the Pentateuch and Talmud, the last accept the Pentateuch only. Moghrebins or African Jews are also numerous.

The modern Jews of Palestine are extremely superstitious, and their superstitions are childish and curious, as for instance, that of hanging a charm over the bed of a sick woman to guard her from the wiles of Lilith, the first wife of Adam. They paint the hand of might in blue, so badly drawn as not to resemble greatly what it is meant for, over their doors and windows as a protection against the evil eye; their donkeys wear blue bead necklaces, and blue beads are hung from their children's hair for the same purpose. They also share many superstitions in common with the Arabs. They have a great dread of death.

They marry very early in life, and among other curiosities in Jerusalem I have seen a Yemenite husband who numbered sixteen summers and had been married two, also a grandmother of the reverend age of twenty-five years. The poor youth had a fortune of £200, and this might account for his hard lot—a managing mamma had perhaps been in a hurry to secure this (to them) large sum for her

daughter's use. Though permitted by law, they rarely marry more than one wife.

Their anxiety for male offspring is well known, every Jew thinking he is the possible father of the Messiah. One of the blessings in their morning service is, "I thank God who has not made me a woman," and is of very early origin. "It is not designed to ascribe any inferiority to the female sex, but to express man's gratitude for being enabled to keep all religious ordinances, including those precepts from which women are exempt, owing to the fact that their fulfilment is restricted to a specific time of day."[1] I knew of a Jew whose wife presented him with two girls one after another. He told her if she had any more girls he would divorce her. In course of time the poor woman presented him with female twins; he went into her room and abused her so violently that he caused her death.

The poverty and distress among the Jews of Jerusalem are very great and heartrending. In a country almost destitute of commerce, agriculture, and manufactures, there is necessarily little or no employment for a number of

[1] See "The Ritual," reply of the Chief Rabbi, p. 8.

persons placed helpless and penniless on the shores, and the contributions of European Jews are altogether inadequate for their support. The frequent holidays imposed by their religion, which they observe so strictly, interfere with their gaining the same amount of wages as Christians. Christians do their best to help them, but the little good done is almost nullified by the fact that Turks will not employ a Jew who has once worked for Christians. During the Feast of Tabernacles, which lasts for eight days, they walk idly about, many starving, and more suffering terrible privations.

While in Jerusalem I gladly embraced an opportunity of seeing the celebration of the Passover in the house of a Sephardim Jew. The whole family, including women, children, and servants, wearing their Sabbath clothes, seated themselves in a room handsomely decorated, round a table on which was placed bread, wine, lettuce, cress, and a meat bone neatly covered with an embroidered cloth. The male members began an unmelodious kind of chant, rocking themselves to and fro as is their custom, to carry out, they say, the Psalmist's injunction, "All my bones shall praise

Thee." The father of the family cut a slice out of a cake of bread in the shape of a crescent, the two pieces he likened to the shore of the Red Sea, joining them together again to represent the waves closing over the host of Pharaoh. He then placed one-half of this bread in a napkin and tied it on the shoulders of his eldest son, where it remained till the end of the ceremony. They all drank wine, chanted again, ate a piece of lettuce and jam each, which we also tasted, and chanted once more. The father broke bread in pieces, put preserve on it, wrapped it in lettuce leaves, wound cress round that again, and gave some to every one to eat. He explained that they were commemorating the ten plagues of Egypt. They also ate eggs as a sign of mourning for the destruction of the Temple, and told us all mourners do this the first day after a death. While this was going on, the guests, who were seated on the divan round the end of the room a little raised from the floor, were offered nargilehs and coffee.

Some American Jews have bought from the Sultan, who owns most of that part of the country, a large tract of land near the Jordan,

where they intend to make settlements. It is doubtful if even they will be able to endure the intense heat of the Ghor, now almost a desert waste, but wonderfully fertile when cultivated.

A plot of ground called Abraham's Vineyard is the site of a mission for giving employment to Jews. A wine-press cut in the solid rock and the finest columbarium in Jerusalem are on this property. The columbarium is circular, cut in the rock, and in the walls may still be seen the little niches in which the funeral urns were placed.

The synagogue of the Sephardim Jews is a miracle of bad taste and dirt, the columns are of wood painted in imitation of marble. It is entered by a doorway, on which the word "Shaddai" is inscribed, covered with glass and called the M'zuza. This every Jew touches with his finger as he passes. The large dome of the synagogue of the Ashkenazim is a conspicuous object in all views of Jerusalem.

We visited the first of these during one of the principal festivals, the eve of the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles; the Jews had spit at us in this place some days before, but now, through the influence of a Jewish acquaintance,

we were admitted to the platform in the centre. Jewesses had to look on through closed lattice work, as ladies do in the House of Commons. After reading for some time in the high-toned, nasal, quivering voice peculiar to Orientals, the priests took eight rolls of the Law from the Ark. These heavy rolls of parchment are contained in wooden cases, from which the ends of the cylinders round which they are rolled project. The ends have silver ornaments, with bells attached to them; fixing these on, which it is an honour to do, is called "crowning the Law." Bouquets of flowers were placed on each, and, accompanied by boys bearing lighted tapers, were carried round the synagogue several times, men dancing and clapping their hands meanwhile. Many of the taliths worn were heavily embroidered with silver.

The synagogue of the Karaites is entered through a doorway which looks like that of a private dwelling, and is situated in the dirty quarter of Jerusalem appropriated to the Jews, where narrow dark lanes succeed other dark lanes, sometimes plunging apparently underground, at others rising in ill-kept steps, wandering under low arches, and winding in-

terminably. They say their name "Karaite" means "Sons of the Learned"; they do not call themselves Jews, and only believe in the Terah or Law of Moses.

The present synagogue is underground, and is very small; a little green latticed gallery like a bird-cage three feet high, represents the accommodation for women. Beneath are caves which have been used as a place of worship by this sect for twelve hundred years. The present building is six hundred years old.

A priest showed us their book of the Law; around each page of the scroll is written in most minute letters the Mishna or interpretation, looking like fine Arabesque ornamentation. Their taliths are inscribed with the text, "Hear, O Israel," &c., and the Messianic portions of the ninth chapter of Isaiah. Their services begin at one o'clock in the morning and last till five. They speak Spanish, and the thirteen or fourteen families which comprise the Karaite sect in Jerusalem live in the houses or flats encompassing the synagogue. In all there are about half a million Karaites in the world. They became an independent sect, they told us, two thousand years ago at Babylon. They

are permitted to pronounce the sacred name, and even *prefer* to say "Adonai."

When we paid their Rabbi a visit we were entertained in a large, clean room having divans on three sides, and there we saw the ladies of the family and four generations of males. A tray was handed round, holding two vases of preserve and a glass of water and spoon for each guest. You are supposed to take a spoonful of preserve, drink a little water, and put the spoon into the glass when you have finished. The old Rabbi, who came from Cairo, and was named Rabbi Moses ben Abraham, consented to sit for the picture which helps to illustrate this book "in order," he said, "that future generations might know what he wore."

It is said that Jews who for some generations have lived in Europe and partly lost their Oriental type, regain it on their return to their native soil in one or two generations.

CHAPTER VI

JERUSALEM—THE REST OF THE INHABITANTS

"Voyaging is Victory."—Sir RICHARD BURTON.

THE greatest charm of the streets of Jerusalem is the wonderful variety of costume which meets the eye on every side, for here all nationalities, all ranks of people congregate, and the plain garments of the English traveller and Russian serf contrast vividly with the gorgeous raiment of Pasha, Patriarch, and Sheik.

A mounted Bedouin in full costume is a figure which cannot escape notice. His thoroughbred mare is decked with gay-coloured woollen tassels falling to the ground, the purpose of which is to keep off the flies which here torment poor animals to a fearful extent, absolutely refusing to leave the prey they have once fastened on, unless removed by main force. He wears an under-garment reaching below the knee, confined by a belt or sash round the waist, in which is stuck a dagger, perhaps a pistol mounted with silver,

and a red leathern purse or tobacco-pouch. Over this is the "abbâ," common to all Arabs. It is a wide cloak, which falls about him somewhat like the drapery of classical statues, and is generally made in broad stripes of brown or blue and yellow. On his head is a richly coloured or white shawl called the "keffiyeh," turned back in front; it falls gracefully behind and over the shoulders. It is bound round the skull with two dark heavy bands made of camels' hair, and called the "agâl." He wears high red leather boots, with curious iron heels, and blue silk tassels hanging down before. His saddle is high in front, and underneath it is a dyed sheepskin; the brass stirrups are square, and each has a spur at two of its corners. A silver-sheathed scimitar hangs at his side, and to complete the equipment he sometimes carries a spear eighteen or twenty feet long adorned with ostrich feathers. He is not often met within the city walls.

He is the most gorgeous creature to be seen about Jerusalem, if we except the Kowasses or servants of the different Consulates and Patriarchates. They wear long, full trousers, short jackets, and swords, while their belts are stuck full of daggers and pistols; the whole of their

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uniform, which is dark red or blue, or some other striking colour, being richly embroidered with gold or silver. The Dragomans affect similar dresses. The Kowasses of the Russian consulate are Albanians, and are allowed to wear the white skirted coats and short full trousers and gaiters which distinguish their nation.

The dress of the Arabs is a cotton shirt, reaching just below the knees, the abbâ or cloak, which they contrive to throw into the most graceful of folds, and the keffiyeh. They either have bare feet or wear red or yellow slippers, lifting them as they walk as if they were always treading the sand of their native desert. They often put a sheepskin coat over their shirts even in very hot weather, on the same principle, I suppose, as that on which they wear the numerous head-coverings they delight in, viz. to keep off the heat. I have seen a man wear a white cap, a felt one, a tarbûsh, and a thick silk turban wound round them, all at the same time. As most Mohammedans shave their heads with the exception of the crown, where they leave a little tuft to be carried up to Paradise by, these coverings probably do not cause them the same inconvenience as they would a European.

The Turks wear long silk robes and coats, and the unfailing tarbûsh with a white turban folded round it. The sleeves of the Turkish gentleman or "effendi" completely conceal the hands.

The costume of the Jews I have already described.

The Armenian priests wear black dresses with peaked hoods; the Greek priests have tall cylinder-like caps.

The costume of the women of Bethlehem is remarkable. The dress is dark blue, varied at the sides with stripes of brilliant colour, sometimes mixed with gold; the sleeves are large and similarly ornamented, and in front the body is most richly embroidered. They tie the long sleeves together behind when they are working, and use the corners as pockets. In cold weather a short jacket of the gayest colours, also covered with embroidery, is added, or a red coat somewhat longer. They do not cover their faces, but wear white veils hanging gracefully from a tall crown-like cap. This cap is very heavy, and on it are sewn the coins which comprise their fortune, often as much as fifty pounds' worth. They weigh something like three pounds,

and are not taken off even at night. Unmarried women wear veils without crowns. The Syrian women's dress is similar, but the coins are worn on the head coronet-wise. I have counted one hundred and fifty pieces of money, some gold and some a debased metal resembling silver, on one woman's head. At the village of Siloam the very children wear coins in rows down each side of the face, and Arab women attach them to a veil suspended by a string from the forehead —a most hideous fashion. All these customs probably arose from the difficulty of finding a safe depositary for money in a lawless country.

In every village there is a slight difference in costume. That of the women of Ain Karîm, the birthplace of St. John the Baptist, consists of a dress always dark blue, and embroidered about the chest. It is usually pulled up through the girdle, so that it reaches but little below the knee. The water at the spring in this village is particularly clear and good, and they carry it in large jars the four miles to Jerusalem, where a piastre a jar is paid for it. They balance the jars on their heads, supporting them with their hands behind. Indeed, women in Palestine are little better than beasts of burden, carrying vegetables, &c., many

miles to the market, and their children as well, while their husbands walk or even ride grandly beside them with only a stick in their hands.

The dress of the Bedouin women is graceful, but looks inconvenient. It is very dark blue in colour, clinging about their figures like that of antique statues, and they always contrive to have a corner trailing on the ground.

No description of the ever-changing population of Jerusalem would be complete without a reference to the Russian pilgrims, who form such a large and conspicuous portion of it at certain seasons of the year. The Russians possess extensive premises surrounded by a stone wall capable of defying an attack in case of need, on which stands a handsome church, accommodation for thousands of pilgrims, a hospital, and shops for their own convenience. It may be remarked in passing that the Greek Church is far in advance of all the others in the size and number of its possessions and in influence throughout Palestine. The male pilgrims wear rough coats, big boots, and are very unkempt. The women also wear rough coats and big boots, and are only to be distinguished from the men by having their heads covered with handkerchiefs instead of

hats. None but women past their youth are allowed to join these pilgrimages, and their whole employment seems to be the exercise of their religion. Their devotion and enthusiasm are quite touching.

Turkish women visit the graves of the dead on Fridays, wearing long white garments which completely conceal the figure. The dresses beneath them are now like those of European ladies. Moslems have a beautiful custom of causing little cup-like hollows to be carved in their tombstones to hold water for the birds.

Arabs are divided into two classes—the Bedouin, who always lead a nomad life, encamping where they find pasture for their cattle; and the inhabitants of villages, whom the former look down upon and despise.

The trade of Jerusalem is carried on almost exclusively by Jews—they are the shopkeepers and merchants, while the mechanics and servants are chiefly Arabs. As servants the latter are of very little use, having no conscience as to stealing and truth-telling. A gentleman entering his own garden met an Arab woman going out with a basket of lettuces on her head. She was a relation of one of his own servants, and she

replied to his inquiries that she had come to sell lettuces, but found he had so many in his garden she was sure he did not want any. On inspecting the lettuce bed he found she had stolen every one, and had thus carried them off before his very eyes.

Abyssinians form a small portion of the heterogeneous community. They may easily be known by their refined features, tall, thin figures, and dark, graceful robes and sandals. It is interesting to see their black devout faces and picturesque attitudes as they sit on the ground or stand at the service in their own beautiful church, or crouch reading and praying at the door of the Holy Sepulchre.

There are no handsomer people to be seen anywhere than in Jerusalem. Armenian and Greek priests are selected for their good looks; numbers of them are so ignorant that they cannot read the words of the service, but repeat them like parrots. Beauty is cultivated among the natives; a pretty wife is selected for a good-looking youth, and Syrians and Bedouins are by nature handsome races. Their flowing draperies add dignity to their good looks, and freedom to their movements.

There is no sight more ridiculous than that of a Turkish "masher," or youth who has European aspirations. Over his petticoats he wears an English cut coat, encases his feet in elastic-side boots, and on his head remains the inevitable tarbûsh. Drinking wine and spirits regardless of the injunctions of the Prophet, he believes himself the equal of the European he affects to despise.

Of English people actually settled in Jerusalem there are only sixty.

Among the varied costumes moving like a panorama before the eyes of the traveller, glide the familiar brown figures of Franciscan monks, the black-cassocked Jesuits, and the less known Algerian Brotherhood founded by the late Abbé Lavigerie, whose costume is white. French sisters of St. Vincent de Paul do good work here as everywhere, tending the sick, receiving and caring for the helpless and aged, and visiting the poor.

As a matter of course beggars are numerous, and their importunate insistence frequently mars the traveller's enjoyment as he gazes on the scenes he has so long dreamed of and travelled so far to see. That some of these people are

poor and deserving must be admitted, but many are really well-to-do, possessing houses and lands. They usually sit in Arab fashion by the wayside, holding a large tin pail in which to receive alms, which do not always consist of money, but may be a piece of bread, a cucumber, an orange, or some such thing thrown into it by a passing Arab. When they behold an unfortunate stranger they follow him with impertinent importunity for a long distance, calling "Mesquin, mesquin," "Sitti," or "Kowadja," "Good-bye, madam, good-bye," "Buon giorno," or "Bonjour," in haphazard fashion. Others of the mendicant fraternity are idiots, whom the Mohammedans revere as saints, because they say their intellect has gone before them to Paradise. Dressed in coats made of more patches than there are days in the year, sometimes wearing the green turban of the Prophet's descendants, these people will almost menace the passers-by for money.

The most melancholy of all sights are the lepers, who, not allowed within the walls, sit outside the gates holding up their mutilated limbs, or ostentatiously concealing some more dreadful deformity, shrieking incessantly, "Back-

sheesh! lebbra, lebbra! backsheesh!" They follow the stranger for yards, exhibiting their scars and wounds till the blood runs cold with horror. However, it is a consolation to know they have a comfortable settlement near Siloam, and some of them are well enough off to come to their business of begging on donkeys. The road to Gethsemane is particularly infested with them. If anything could be worse, it is the fact that many beggars pretend to be lepers or Christians who are not so in order to excite charity.

The Turkish soldiers, of whom there are about one thousand in Jerusalem, form another element in the gorgeous pageant of costumes displayed for the admiration of the visitor. The Bashi-bazouks or horse soldiers are wild, picturesque-looking fellows, mounted on thoroughbred steeds with gay trappings and flowing tails. They wear a dark blue uniform ornamented with orange-coloured braid, high boots, and keffiyehs. Very shabby as to uniform, which is dark blue and European in fashion, the infantry may usually be seen in slippers when it is hot, and heavy boots or brilliant woollen leggings when it is cold, and

invariably in the ugly and unbecoming tarbûsh.

On Fridays and Sundays a military band plays in a small garden lately planted outside the Jaffa gate. Here may be heard those extraordinarily florid shrieks, trills, and squeaks, accompanied by the incessant and irrelevant beating of drums and cymbals, which constitute Turkish music; while white-robed ladies squat on the ground with their children in one place, their lords sitting on low stools and smoking nargilehs in another. Sometimes one may recognise a quaint Arab air amid their performances, reminding one of the Hon. Mrs. Norton's well-known song, "No More Sea." It would seem as if each man played at his own sweet will had they not written music. Mahomet regarded musical instruments as the engines of the devil, and said good Moslems should have no ear.

The atâl or porter is a feature in the picture not to be overlooked. Bent nearly double, he carries immense weights, so much as half a ton (this sounds incredible, but it is a fact), on a cushion bound on his back, and kept in place by a strap round the head, sometimes

supporting himself by a short, strong stick. In building, as no cranes are used, men carry the material up an inclined plane; they are loaded at the bottom like animals, and other workmen unload them when they reach their destination. Dr. Geikie thus describes them: "You stand aside to let one atâl pass with three or four heavy portmanteaux on his back; another follows with a box much bigger than himself; and a third with two huge empty barrels, or a load of wheat or of furniture; the road they have to travel broken, rough, slippery, and often steep, making the burden additionally hard to support. They find constant employment, as there are no roads or wheeled conveyances."

There is a small community of people commonly called "the Americans on the wall," because one of their homes is situated on one of the highest spots, and overhangs the city wall eighty feet above it. They have everything in common, believe that God is guiding them by direct inspiration, and hope from their elevated position to be the first to see Christ when He appears. The view from this house is one of the very finest in Jerusalem. The course of the Tyropœon valley may be most

distinctly traced, and the general situation of the city and its surroundings plainly and distinctly seen. Opposite yawns the Grotto of Jeremiah. General Gordon used to come to the roof of this house and make a fanciful plan of Jerusalem, which he said resembled the human body, Golgotha being the head, the city the body, &c. &c.

Naturally many people with unbalanced intellects find their way to the Holy City. Without being profane, I may mention that one lady lives there in order to be the first to give Christ a cup of tea when He comes, and a certain man to be ready to help to rebuild the new Temple; while another, now dead, walked about for years always carrying a cross the size he supposed the real one to have been—it now marks his grave.

Striding with slow and solemn pace among the chattering crowd comes the solemn camel. With an expression of lofty disdain he gazes through his half-closed eyelids; if he is urged to lie down, rise up, or mend his pace, he remonstrates loudly with a rattling growl which seems to come from some deep recess in his interior. The limit of his load is placed at six hundredweight. He carries baskets filled

with stones, or one large stone alone may tremble on his hump; sometimes he is half-hidden under a mass of canes or hay, huge sacks of corn the size of his own body may project from either side, or he carries the tents and the whole of an Arab's household belongings, with the cocks and hens on the top; or, seated cross-legged may be seen a half-clad Arab or perhaps two, rocking to and fro on the wooden saddle with a motion suggestive of sea-sickness.

On trial, however, the motion is not so unpleasant as it looks; the greatest difficulty is when the creature rises from the ground. He gets up on his hind legs first, and you must hold on carefully to prevent yourself from being thrown forward; then his huge forelegs begin to unfold, and you must hold on doubly tight to save yourself from a similar fate backwards. At last you are in equilibrium, and the camel sets forward at a jog-trot, not at all difficult to put up with.

When a camel is to be killed for eating he is decorated with tassels, beads, &c., and led for several days round the village, till sufficient orders for his flesh are received. When there

is no pasturage, the Bedouin feed camels on cakes made of seeds called "sesame" or "doura."

The donkeys come next in order of importance, if they are not the most important animals in Jerusalem, as neither horses nor carriages are available within the walls. These useful little creatures are seen everywhere, pushing their way along the narrowest lanes, climbing the steepest hills, and sometimes carrying so many as three riders. Turkish ladies too, ride them, squatting astride on their backs as we might suppose monkeys would do if they rode. Seated on large padded saddles, and enveloped in voluminous white drapery, they look like beds on a journey. Donkeys are used for carrying all kinds of burdens, and are most useful in conveying water in the black goat-skins which always retain the shape of their original inhabitants. A well-groomed donkey, with the ornamental saddle-trappings used here, looks really a fine animal, nearly equal to his celebrated brothers of Cairo. A drove of laden donkeys driven by a half-naked Arab crying, "O-âr! o-âr! derâk! derâk!" is one of the most common sights in Jerusalem; then indeed the traveller must take heed to his ways.

Mules are much used, and are fine animals.

And now a line for the poor pariah dogs, which infest the streets in such numbers. Belonging to no one, without a home, the hand of every Moslem and Jew against them, packs of these creatures dwell in their separate quarters, into which they allow no other dog to enter unless he be known to them. They are, as a rule, but very few removes from the fox and jackal. They sleep all day in the streets, on the flat roofs—anywhere, everywhere; but at night, unfortunately, they all awaken, and running along the tops of the broad stone walls, go from house to house baying incessantly till night is made more than hideous. I have seen a young donkey attacked by a pack of twelve of these creatures, while at least twenty were seated on an eminence near ready to share the spoils. All dead animals are, of course, their legitimate prey. They infest the cemeteries, notably that on Gordon's Calvary, and Moslem graves are very shallow.

When an Arab mounts a donkey he sits as far back as possible, seems to prefer riding without a saddle, and with only a halter by

way of a bridle; he never ceases drumming on its sides with his bare legs. How the young Arabs stick on a bare-backed steed without either saddle or stirrups is a marvel; they seem to the manner born, and in this way will gallop over rocky heights and down steep ravines which seem impossible to the best equipped European rider. Jews were formerly forbidden to ride horses in Jerusalem—I do not know whether this law is still enforced or not.

A fully caparisoned Bedouin steed is a magnificent object from a pictorial point of view, but I am not qualified to write on a subject so momentous and so open to universal criticism as the horse.[1] The usual pace of an Arab on his steed is a walk; his gallops are few and far between, and end in his reining the animal up so sharply as to pull him down

[1] I am indebted to an unknown writer in *Harper's Magazine* for the following information on this subject :—

"The splendid beauty of the Arabian, as we understand it, is a delusion. Except for the saddle, the Arabian horse is not worth his salt. The saddle is covered with sheepskin, and the seat peculiar, with very short stirrups, knees thrust forward, and heels dug into the horse's flanks. The Syrian bit has two branches, the curb-chain is a ring, when you put the bridle in the horse's mouth you slip this ring over his chin. The bridle is often a fancy one, trimmed with shell-work, and the breast-strap and saddle-trapping are wonderfully picturesque. The rich colouring of the Bedouin's

on his haunches. A Bedouin will not sell a mare outright, but stipulates that she shall never be used for other than riding purposes, and that he is to have the first mare foal or more according to the bargain. The manes and tails are left uncut, and at festivals dyed with henna.

Syrian sheep are of a rich cream colour with brown marks, and they have broad, flat tails like a frying-pan, with a tassel in the centre. The tail is the only fat they have about them. They follow the shepherd, who walks majestically before them, armed with a scimitar and gun six feet long, and alluring them with a peculiar cry. Shepherds are often seen carrying two or three new-born lambs in their bosoms, the little heads peeping from the ample folds of their garments. They have a loud call, which they can make resound from hill to hill for the space of six or even eight miles.

clothes and trappings is a never-ending source of delight to the eye. For all diseases of the horse they have but one remedy—the hot iron. In feeding and watering the horse, the Bedouins seem to be equally unreasoning.

"The horse is shod with the Arabian plate; except a hole about an inch in diameter in the centre it covers the entire foot. The women of the people ride astride a pad with long stirrups or none. There is nothing odd about their seat as about that of their Egyptian sisters. Their principal mount is the ass."

Both Arabs and Jews are fond of keeping a pet sheep or goat, which they adorn with magenta-coloured dye and beads; the creature follows them like a dog. Syrian goats have very long ears, sweeping the ground as they graze.

When an Arab wishes to shoot partridges, he takes a screen about four feet high and three feet wide, painted with strange figures remotely resembling lions and tigers. It has two holes for the eyes and one for the gun. This he stretches on two cross pieces of cane and holds before him, advancing to a spot where the game is known to be. When the birds see the screen they seem fascinated, tremble, and are easily shot by the sportsman, who can thus advance within very short range of them.

All these scenes and costumes and many more unfold themselves under the glowing blue of a Syrian sky, or beneath the flickering light of an awning-shaded bazaar, with a background of picturesque old buildings and time-mellowed walls and towers, which, even if it were possible to set aside their sacred associations, are noble relics of antiquity. Sometimes a glorious crimson sunset behind the wild Judæan hills

adds its glamour to the scene, at others the mystery of a night more captivating in its intensity, and illuminated by more brilliant stars than are seen anywhere else beyond the tropics, lends its all-pervading enchantment to the Oriental pageant.

CHAPTER VII

JERUSALEM—THE HOLY SEPULCHRE, AND SO-CALLED GORDON'S CALVARY

"What though the Holy City is trodden down of the Gentiles, and mockery is enshrined in its sanctuary! the glens which echoed back the minstrel's song, the hills over which Jesus walked, and on whose sides He taught and prayed, the vines, the figs, the olives which suggested His beautiful parables, are all there."

THE thoughts of the traveller who finds himself for the first time in Jerusalem will naturally turn to the Holy Sepulchre, and to its sacred precincts his first visit will probably be paid. I am not going to wax enthusiastic over what is, if we except the Harâm, undoubtedly the most interesting spot in the world. Every one will regard it with different opinions and different feelings. My purpose is simply to describe as accurately as I can the observations of a traveller who for eighteen months rarely omitted to visit this great temple of Christianity at least once every fortnight. No spot on earth has ever been so bitterly disputed, for no place has so much blood ever been shed. Alas! blood is still shed in

the same sacred precincts, and the peace which seemingly pervades its solemn aisles and corridors is hollow and vain!

And first I must warn the reader against a slight error into which I myself fell, that my description may be as clear as possible. The so-called Church of the Holy Sepulchre is properly called the "Church of the Resurrection," or "Anastasis." The tomb is a building, monument, or shrine, call it which you will, contained within it. When the Emperor Constantine first "discovered" what he pronounced to be the tomb of Christ, he erected his edifices *round* it, not *over* it; it formed no part of his church. It was not till long after his time that it was included within walls, and it is still a separate building in itself, though covered by the great dome of the church. We may therefore speak of the tomb and church separately.

Following the street called Christian Street, because here pilgrims mostly congregate, the visitor comes to a small turning at right angles to it, the little shops in which are devoted to the sale of wax candles of every dimension, from the lordly painted pillar which stands like a sentinel before the altar, to the tiny taper which the

poorest pilgrim burns before the shrine of some favourite saint, and of every imaginable and unimaginable *objet de pieté.* Gaudy paintings of saints, which appeal to the imagination of the Greeks,[1] rosaries and crucifixes for the Latins, beads, images, dried Palestine flowers, &c. &c., for all, are mingled with Japanese bowls, Dead Sea roses, amber pipe-tubes, and pocket-handkerchiefs adorned with religious subjects. As you pass down the steps leading from this street, these articles abound more and more, and sitting close on either side are men and women from Bethlehem selling the mother-of-pearl articles which they produce in such quantities. Shrouds are also sold here printed with a rude representation of the crucifixion, and made the exact length of the Stone of Unction. No Jew is allowed to enter these precincts. One who ventured to do so two years ago was severely beaten about the head, and nearly killed by the Greeks and native Christians. He was only rescued by the timely interference of the Turkish soldiers.

Passing through the brawling crowd, a paved

[1] In Jerusalem Greek, Latin, and Armenian are purely religious designations, and have no reference whatever to nationality.

quadrangle lower than the street is reached. On the left is the Church of the Resurrection.

Storm-worn and battered, mellow and grey with age, its massive tower reduced by earthquake to only half its original height, the noble old church stands before you. From its base to the magnificent cross which crowns the cupola, its appearance is at once imposing and venerable. On the other three sides of the square the buildings look unimportant; one's whole attention is therefore riveted on the church itself. There are two doors, one of which is walled up; the arches above them are supported by groups of magnificent marble columns, which remind one of St. Mark's, Venice. The façade is also pierced with two fine Gothic windows. In front of the door is a flat tombstone which covers the last resting-place of a crusader, Philip d'Aubigny.

The doors are extremely massive, and lined with iron. In one is an opening covered with iron bars. The interior is at first dark and confusing, but as the eyes get accustomed to the gloom, the visitor perceives on his left the Moslem guardians, who, seated on a raised daïs, smoking nargilehs, and continually imbibing

cups of coffee, keep watch over the behaviour of the Christians.

Opposite the entrance is a marble slab, surrounded by gigantic candelabra, some of marble, with the delicate carving of the Greeks, others of bronze, the elaborate work of the Italians of the Renaissance. Over it are suspended many precious lamps. It is the Stone of Anointment on which the body of Jesus is said to have lain when it was anointed by Nicodemus. Pilgrims measure this stone, in order that they may have their shrouds made the same length. Near it, still more in the dark, is a round slab covered with a sort of iron cage. This is said to be the stone on which the Virgin Mary stood to watch the crucifixion of her Son.

The fine Rotunda is then entered. It is sixty-five feet in diameter, and in the centre is the ugly erection containing the Holy Sepulchre. Built of yellowish-red marble, it is decorated in the most execrable taste; silver lamps, badly painted pictures, and artificial flowers are placed on it in profusion, but in front are more splendid candelabras, the candles represented by tin tubes painted. The visitor first enters a small antechapel, in the middle of which is a fragment of

stone said to be that on which the angel sat. Stooping to go through another doorway, made so low that even involuntarily he must incline himself, he sees a chamber in size six feet by seven. On the right-hand side is a white marble slab arranged as an altar, and over it hang forty-two silver lamps of exquisite workmanship. This is the so-called Holy Sepulchre.

But it is not these things which are most worthy of notice; it is the intense devotion of the poor pilgrims who gather here to kiss this stone, and weep and lay their rosaries and relics on it, believing they thus become hallowed; for there is usually in Jerusalem a number of people who have saved up perhaps all their lives, and certainly suffered very much, to offer their prayers and lament their transgressions at this shrine. A priest stands by the altar to sell candles to those willing to offer them; and I was struck with the manner in which he examined every coin he received to see if it was genuine or not. Many a pilgrim wept on thus reaching the bourne of his long and painful travel; many a rough-looking man burst into tears, many a woman stood enrapt in that divine abstraction which

is near akin to ecstacy, but—the priest examined his coins.

Masses are said here daily, and the chapel is shared among Greeks, Latins, and Armenians. A small chapel at the back is the property of the Copts.

Backing out of the Sepulchre, the visitor is at once seized upon, if he has been so fortunate as to escape hitherto, by a guide who shows by the light of a very dim candle two old rock-cut tombs, which he invites him to believe are those of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. He further points out the well of St. Helena, and the place where Jesus was mistaken for a gardener. Near this is the chapel of the Latins, where devotees put a rod into a hole to touch a piece of a stone column to which it is said Christ was bound, and afterwards kiss. I have seen enough of this column in different places to reach to the top of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. There is a piece in many churches of as many different kinds of stone. In St. Peter's at Rome there is an *entire* white marble column of Byzantine workmanship about which the same story is told.

In a dark chapel which serves as a sacristy for

the Latin priests, they show the huge two-handed sword and spurs of Godfrey the Crusader, appropriate memorials of a man who crossed sea and land to conquer the Holy Sepulchre, and having done so refused to be crowned king where his Lord was crucified. In another and darker place are shown two holes in a stone, which are called the "bonds of Christ." He is said to have sat with His legs in them. Then we are called upon to look at the prison of Christ, the altar of the centurion, and a chapel where they cast lots for the garments. All these sites have very poor altars erected over them. The traveller then descends many steps, and beneath the ancient and interesting crypt is shown a large cavern in a rock where St. Helena is said to have found the three crosses, nails, and crown of thorns. Here is also the marble seat in which she sat to superintend the excavations.

Credulity is severely taxed by the time we reach this cave, but the strain is altogether too great when one is asked to believe one looks on the tombs of Melchisedec and Adam—and all this within the walls of a single church.

The Greeks being vastly in the ascendant in Jerusalem just now possess the largest and most

gaudy chapel in the Church of the Resurrection. In the midst is a piece of *column marking* the centre of the world, from under which the earth was taken of which Adam was formed.

At last returning to the entrance of the church, we mount the very steep steps which lead to Calvary. Here, under the dazzling light of countless lamps, a hole about eighteen inches deep cut in solid rock, where the cross is supposed to have stood, is shown; beside it, covered with a silver plate, which slides aside, is the rent made during the earthquake which accompanied the crucifixion. Behind the altar which covers these are two colossal silver figures with painted faces, supposed to represent the Virgin and Jesus Christ. The holes made by the crosses of the two thieves are here also.

I must content myself with giving this description, the whole thing is particularly difficult to deal with. Shall I say it is a trial of faith? No, rather let me say that the exhibition is a shock to one's highest sentiments, and that, apart from the fact that one is really in Jerusalem, the inspection does not add in the least to one's stock of religious impressions.

Behind this chapel is an Armenian monastery.

I wandered into the refectory; there was a long stone table down the centre of an old and dimly lighted room, a background already prepared for a picture of the Lord's Supper.

The cross which crowns the huge cupola rises high amid the many minarets from which the mueddins summon their co-religionists to prayer, thus symbolising the close juxtaposition of Christianity and Mohammedanism so characteristic of this great religious centre. On some festivals it is illuminated; it then seems to stand out in the clear heavens a fiery spectral cross, separated completely from earth and all material elements.

It would be presumptuous in any one who has not made the topography of Jerusalem a special study to offer an opinion as to the authentic site of the Holy Sepulchre. It has been, and still is, a matter of angry controversy, each suggestion having its warm advocates and bitter opponents. Nearly every one who visits the Holy Land enters into the discussion, and nearly as many finally come to the conclusion that all discussion on the subject is absolutely futile, the Bible indications being so few and indefinite.

There are only three sites proposed with any show of probability. 1. The Church of the Sepulchre, that being the spot discovered by Constantine and his mother Helena about A.D. 326, round which he erected his portico and church, and which the crusaders believed in and fought for. 2. Skull Hill, or the modern Calvary, as it is sometimes called. The arguments in favour of this site are, that it answers the slight description of Golgotha by the Apostles in somewhat resembling the form of a skull, in being outside the modern walls, and on what must always have been a main thoroughfare to and from Jerusalem. This opinion has received the powerful support of General Gordon. At the base of the hill is a rock tomb, which Gordon also believed in; it is now said to be fifth-century work. An English lady has purchased the sepulchre and the land adjoining. 3. Ferguson, an architect who made many researches in the city, supposes that the Kubbet es Sakhrah is the place of the tomb, and that the crucifixion took place within the area of the Harâm es Sherif.

It is perhaps wise that the truth as to this locality should never be decided, for who could

wish to behold the real scene of the sublime drama of the Redemption desecrated with unworthy altars, defiled by bloodshed, and polluted by the battles of the rival creeds as the tomb at the Church of the Resurrection has been and is? Thoughtful men who have made Jerusalem a subject of study for years, are of opinion that there is little authentic in the eight times destroyed city of Jerusalem except the site of the Temple.

Much no doubt remains to be revealed by future examination; but the Turkish Government does not readily allow excavations to be made, and research is rendered as difficult as may be. Should a Turk by chance discover some remains of antiquity, he hastily fills up the excavations and endeavours to buy the ground before news of his find gets abroad and the spot becomes more valuable. Moreover, the various religious bodies are hastily buying up all the traditional sites the Moslems are willing to sell. The Russian Church has secured a very large plot of ground outside the Jaffa gate, the Armenians possess the greater part of Mount Zion, the Latins and Greeks have a Gethsemane each. The Latins possess much

property on the Mount of Olives, and have just obtained a large tract of land between the brook Kedron and the Golden gate, also the Pool of Bethesda. When the final adjustment takes place, no doubt the reverend fathers will know how to keep safe hold of their vast possessions.

When the Pasha of Jerusalem heard that the Christians had found a tomb which they believed to be that once belonging to Joseph of Arimathea, and wished, consequently, to buy the ground in which it was situated, he determined, although anxious to obtain the money, as Moslems usually are, that his co-religionists should have a share in what might prove to be the burying-place of "the prophet Isa." He accordingly stipulated that a little turn should be made in the enclosing wall exactly above the sepulchre, where Moslems could go and pray, saying that "if the Christians had their Jesus below, he would have his Mahomet above."

I once saw a fight here between some Russian pilgrims, to whom he denied entrance except for a fee larger than they could afford, and the custodian, a man whose green turban

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proclaimed he had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. The same man asked us three francs each to enter the cave, and when we threatened to leave without seeing it, suddenly dropped his pretensions. The saying is very apposite, "If a man has been to Mecca once, he will steal something; if twice, a great deal; if three times, all you have." A more appropriate custodian now replaces the Mecca pilgrim, and the established fee for admission is half a franc. He conducts you into the tomb, adapting his voice exactly to the requirements of his narration. Descending a few steps you pass through a narrow doorway and see three tombs in a small rock-hewn chamber. That to the right, having a marble slab in front, and distinguished by a cross carved over it, is said to be the real tomb in which Christ was laid, and you are informed by the sad-voiced cicerone that the others were never finished, as tradition requires. The impression they gave me was rather that they had been partially destroyed. All about this locality are tombs, and the descent to the door of the tomb-chamber has been cut through a thick stratum of human bones, which crumble to dust as you tread over them.

We have wandered far, however, from the other sepulchre, over which the stately monument of the Church of the Resurrection has been erected. That neglected quiet tomb, which appealed so strongly to the emotional nature of General Gordon, is certainly more in accordance with the feelings of the wanderer from the West in search of the last resting-place of his Lord, than the gaudy, sumptuous sepulchre where, amid noise and irreverence, the pilgrim-world congregates.

On the east side of the exterior of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre are some remains of great interest.

To see them we must mount a flight of steps covered with dirt and rubbish, behind the new Russian Hospital. Achieving this, and passing through a dilapidated wooden gate at the top, a narrow lane is found (of course it is dirty), and at the time of our visit women, children, cats, goats, and rabbits were disporting themselves in the gutter. In one room at the end lives a whilom acquaintance, Isa the scavenger, without whose friendly aid it would have been difficult to discover the whereabouts of the "antîkas." The Souk or Bazaar street

runs underneath, and looking through some grated openings we could see the busy life below, though we were standing in a good-sized garden planted with large cypress-trees.

The first edifice to which our attention was directed resembled a ruined Gothic church; within the walls are numerous dwelling-places, and in the dark crypt, where donkeys are now stabled, are remains of ancient walls and wells. Here stood, it is said, the Basilica of Constantine. Our guide next led us to a large space forming part of the roof of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, around which are remains of arches, portions of pillars and capitals evidently Byzantine. Round and within this space a colony of Abyssinians have erected some miserable little hovels, in which they live amid foul odours which would prove fatal to Europeans. Tall and gaunt in figure, with delicate feet and hands, and calm melancholy cast of features, the men moved languidly among the ruins; women sat inanely on the ground. They never do any work, and derive their meagre subsistence, which consists chiefly of herbs and garlic, from alms. They point out an olive-tree where Abraham found the ram entangled which

he sacrificed instead of Isaac, that event having taken place here, they say.

Again mounting steps you are shown the modern-looking Coptic church; the buildings around are the monastery of the Copts and the residence of their bishop. From the roof is a good view of the city and the Mount of Olives. Here we obtained the key of a blue door, which seemed on being opened to lead to nothing but a dark abyss. Peering into the obscurity we became aware of many steps, each fifteen inches high, descending into still deeper darkness. A huge balustrade of coarse cement, very carefully made, protected us on one side, on the other the scarp of the natural rock. Down we climbed, preceded by a Coptic priest, who, after we had descended forty-three of these half-ruined steps, suddenly plunged his hand into water, and elevating his candle as high as he could, showed us that nothing but water appeared in front of us, arched by natural rock as far as the eye could penetrate. This frightful chasm is called the cistern of St. Helena, but probably dates from a much earlier period than that of this all-discovering lady; it may have been one of those huge reservoirs with which the Jews

honeycombed the rocks under ancient Jerusalem. Water is still drawn hence, but is not of good quality.

Thus there was first this deep subterranean cavern, over it the modern Souk, and again above, the probable remains of the Basilica of Constantine. Such is Jerusalem, ruin above ruin, house above house, a city where all religions, all nations, mingle as nowhere else in the world, and picturesque beyond comparison. The longer you live within her walls, the more loath you become to leave her; and the dirt and superstition which at first offend, become forgotten or overlooked in the overwhelming interest which attaches to this unique city.

In digging the foundations of the Russian Hospital near the Holy Sepulchre the remains of an old gate, a portion of a wall, the pavement of a street, and many other fragments were found. A structure resembling an altar was also discovered.

How difficult it is to realise that this is the nineteenth century, and that there are such places as London and Paris in existence, as you stand amid these ancient fanes and see the costumes and customs of a remote antiquity

still surrounding you! This becomes the actuality, that the figment of a dream. It is as though civilisation and progress had been paralysed here at the birth of Jesus Christ, or even earlier. In Abraham's day the Jews did so and so, and their descendants still carry out their forefathers' injunctions; Mahomet has fixed once and for all such and such a belief, and the Oriental says what was good enough for his father is good enough for him. "Kismet." And so the years have rolled on, till Syria has become a fossilised specimen of what the East was four thousand years ago, as in a lesser degree Pompeii presents us with a picture fresh and vivid to-day of the civilisation of ancient Italy.

But the time is fast coming when all this will no longer be the case. The palpitations of the great heart of the world reach even so far as Palestine; already the deep dissatisfaction, which is the herald of progress, is making itself felt; a railway is carrying its civilising power even into the depths of the savage Haurân, and leading the way for European influence, which is slowly but surely producing its effect even on the Oriental who despises it.

If the stalwart peasants of Syria and hardy Bedouin knew their own strength, and the numerous sects, now exhausting themselves in internecine warfare, could be united under a competent leader, much might be accomplished for that deliverance from the abhorred Turkish yoke for which the people seem anxiously waiting, and the regeneration of Syria which is sure to follow. "Inshallah!"

CHAPTER VIII

JERUSALEM—RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

"Jerusalem! Ceux qui on passé avant moi sur la terre en ont déjà écrit bien des livres, profonds on magnifiques. Mais je veux simplement essayer de noter les aspects actuels de sa désolation et de ses ruines; dire quel est, à notre époque transitoire, le degré d'effacement de sa grande ombre sainte, qui une generation très pro-chaine ne verra même plus."
—PIERRE LOTI.

THESE words of Pierre Loti's express the spirit in which I approach the task of writing a short description of some of the countless religious ceremonies I have witnessed in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem being the greatest centre of religious activity in the world, not even excepting Rome itself, is therefore the scene of more numerous and more varied ceremonies than any other city. All Christian sects are strongly represented there, besides the Jews and Mohammedans. The following table gives an idea of the strength of the different denominations during the pilgrim season, though of course in the East it is utterly impossible to obtain an accurate census:—

Greeks	4000
Latins	3800
Armenians	600
Protestants	400
Copts	100
Abyssinians	50
Syrians	40
Moslems	8000
Jews	45,000 or 50,000

Knowing the great demand for tickets to view the most celebrated of all ceremonies in Jerusalem, the Greek Miracle of the Holy Fire at Easter in the Church of the Sepulchre, I applied to one of the Fathers at the Greek Patriarchate a month beforehand. He then told me that, having been made Bishop of Mount Tabor, he no longer had the distributing of them, but he wrote his name on my card and instructed me to give it to the Dragoman some time during Holy Week. I had no faith in the word of the Greek, but went to the Patriarchate on chance. I was shown into a room where Turks were sitting on divans smoking and fingering beads; in the centre was a stand stuck full of cigarettes, and to about every three Turks a little table with ash-trays and matches was placed. They considered coffee more appropriate to me, and presented it with solemn politeness. Then a Greek priest entered the

room, said he had heard of me before, and gave me two tickets, as he said, "without money and without price." I could hardly believe my good fortune, for these tickets are most difficult to obtain, and generally mean a very handsome douceur to the Dragoman or Kowass who procures them.

On Good Friday the church already presents an extraordinary spectacle. Russian pilgrims, both men and women, take up their abode in it for the night in order to have places for the next day's ceremony. Many poor creatures spend thirty hours at a stretch there. The pavement is thickly covered with them, and they are allowed to put up shelves on which to lie between the pillars of the Rotunda; some take blankets, all take food, water, and candles with them. Processions make their way round the Sepulchre amid the prostrate forms; the church is illuminated, and soldiers are on guard.

At 9 A.M. on Saturday we went to the gallery in the Great Dome, which alone is available for ladies. We took camp-stools and refreshments, and had good front seats. The patient crowd of yesterday was still in its place, talking loudly and shouting wildly. Men mounted on each other's

shoulders ran round and round the Sepulchre in a state of frenzy, clasping their hands and chanting these words :—

"Hatha Kuber Saidna,
Sabt en Nar wa Aidna
Wa hatha Kuber Saidna."

This is the tomb of our Lord;
The seventh day is the Fire and our feast,
And this is the tomb of our Lord.

The door of the church was soon afterwards shut, and repeated blows on its iron knocker announced many a belated arrival. The confusion and noise continued to increase; the crowd was wrought up to that pitch of excitement when it becomes dangerous. The people on the shelves, which were three deep, and reached by ladders from the floor of the church, folded up their beds; mothers gave their sucking babies a final meal, and every one prepared his or her candle. At ten o'clock a regiment[1] of five or six hundred soldiers filed into the building and took up positions so as to leave a clear space round the Sepulchre, pushing the howling Russian pilgrims back against the walls and into the corners. The struggling and confusion that ensued are

[1] The military guard is paid for by the Patriarch, and costs about £1000, which goes to the officers.

indescribable; the crowd seemed elastic, and swayed to and fro like a surging sea. Struggles for places occurred in every direction; such variety and force of gesticulation I never saw before even in the East. Men brought kerosene tins full of water and served it out to the thirsty soldiers, while the officers paraded about with whips in their hand. Some enthusiasts fastened ropes to the hole whence the fire was to come, and held on by them for fear of being forced back. The seething crowd of humanity burst once more into their savage chorus; the officers striking them, vainly tried to make them desist.

Then the solemn tolling of a deep-toned bell resounded, and the frantic crowd broke again and again through the ranks of the soldiers. The Greek Patriarch and some priests appeared and made the tour of the Sepulchre; the former entered the Greek chapel, where he was robed, and the faint echo of a short service held there was heard, as the screaming and clapping of hands grew, if possible, louder and wilder.

At last a number of priests carrying banners issued from the Greek church amid the applause of the multitude, and with a rush some men, headed by a priest, took possession of a space

opposite the hole, which had hitherto been kept vacant. These were pilgrims from Damascus, who had given the largest sum of money to be the first to light their candles at the Holy Fire. At this point sticks and whips were freely used. Then a procession of priests joined those carrying the banners, and the Greek Patriarch himself, in lavishly decorated robes and crown, and looking like a mass of silver and gold, appeared; all walked round the Sepulchre three times, headed by three gorgeous Kowasses and soldiers carrying whips. The crowd shouted and sang, and a free fight occurred in front of the hole, in which many persons were injured. The priests became very nervous, and hurried on the procession; when the Patriarch arrived opposite the door of the Sepulchre for the last time they hastily unrobed him of his gorgeous vestments and ran off with them, while he himself rushed quickly into the Sepulchre. In a minute or so the bells burst forth with a triumphant clang, the priest nearest the hole thrust a candle into it, drew it forth alight and ran off with it; the crowd rushed toward it amid inexpressible confusion; those whose candles were burning first handed the light to their friends, and passed it on from one to another;

strings were let down from the balconies with candles to be lighted, priests set fire to the whole of the lamps and candles about the Sepulchre, and in an incredibly short space of time the huge place was filled with blaze and smoke.

The Russian pilgrims put their hands into the flames and rubbed them over their faces; they seemed to inhale the smoke while making the sign of the cross with their candles. Men singed their beards and hair with it. Meantime the soldiers disappeared, and the processions of the Syrians, Armenians, and Copts, were seen dimly through the smoke making the circuit of the Sepulchre in their turn. The last look down into the body of the church was like looking into Pandemonium, a dense mass of smoke illumined with flashing and ever-moving lights. At this point the soldier on guard in our balcony told us all was over. We looked down on the space in front of the church and saw a mass of heads over which one might have walked; on the roof of the Patriarchate a man with a sword in his hand standing on the shoulders of his friends, beat time to a wild song accompanied by clapping of hands. Up the street numberless Russian pilgrims were making their way carrying, some

bunches of extinguished candles, others candles kept carefully alight; beggars and lepers innumerable blocked the way.

Thus ended one of the most extraordinary spectacles in the world, a spectacle unique in the annals of Christianity, and a disgrace to the Church which allows it. Surely before many more years have rolled away the Miracle of the Holy Fire on the eve of the Greek Easter will be a thing of the past, its memory alone preserved in the gossiping annals of globe-trotting tourists like myself.

A messenger always stands near the Sepulchre to catch the Holy flame and convey it with all speed to Bethlehem; he is hustled over the shoulders of the crowd to the door of the church, where a horse is waiting, and gallops off at breakneck speed.

Some years ago the Sepulchre was in the possession of the Latins; during a grand fight, one Easter, when many persons were killed, the Sepulchre itself was burnt down; the Latins were not rich enough at the time to rebuild it, so the Greeks, taking advantage of the opportunity, did so, and have held possession of it ever since.

The ceremony rarely or never takes place without loss of life.

The Greek priests, when questioned as to the performance of what they know to be a trick, profess that they have no intention of deceit, and openly avow to educated inquirers that there is no miracle in the affair, but add that they are compelled to continue the ceremony by the lower classes of their Church, who absolutely exact it.

One of the most imposing of the Greek ceremonies is the "Washing of the Feet," which takes place in the courtyard of the Church of the Sepulchre. "Every accessible spot, and some to all appearances unapproachable, are occupied by an eager crowd. In gorgeous robes the Patriarch and bishops endeavour to represent to the people the gracious act of our Saviour."[1]

The ceremonies in the Greek Chapel on Easter Sunday are most interesting and imposing. The magnificent silver and gold lamps, costly offerings of emperors and other potentates, are ablaze with light; the Patriarch in his rich robes is preceded by priests bearing baskets of flowers, which they scatter amid the reverent kneeling crowd, and after a short service six priests, stationing

[1] Rev. Robinson Lees.

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themselves in various places of the building, chant in alternate parts the "Second Resurrection." At the conclusion of each part silver gongs are struck, the strokes increasing in number as the chanting proceeds, the whole finishing with a clash of all the gongs and bells together which is most effective.

The Latin ceremonies in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre are not comparable in magnificence with those in St. Peter's or St. John Lateran's in Rome, but the devotion of the pilgrims and mixture of costumes and nationalities lend them a peculiar interest which no other city can boast. The finest Latin ceremony at the Holy Sepulchre is that of Corpus Christi.

Of the Armenian ceremonies, that at their Church of St. James, on the festival of the saint, is by far the finest, and is indeed equalled by none I have ever seen. Like all such things in Jerusalem, it commences very early in the morning, and we were late when, at eight o'clock, making our way through numbers of veiled women squatted on the ground, we stood in front of the gorgeous altar. The Armenian Patriarch, robed most gorgeously, was performing the service, assisted by two bishops in pink satin; the altar was one blaze of gold and light;

at either side stood three priests, holding inlaid sticks surmounted by gold shields adorned with little bells, which they shook; squatting and standing alternately on a rich carpet in front, men and boys in rich satin robes chanted vigorously. The procession started from the altar; the eighty-six years old Patriarch, supported by two priests, carried a piece of the true cross in a crystal monstrance, under a gilt canopy twice round the church, preceded by bishops and priests, Armenian, Syrian, Abyssinian, and Coptic, all robed in most wonderful vestments, and carrying relics, little shrines, and incense. At one time during the service the Patriarch and two priests knelt in front of the altar and administered the sacrament to the consul and principal persons present. The scene was like a picture by Titian vivified, the hoary Patriarch in white and gold contrasting finely with the brown-headed priests in pink, with a background of gold and flames of innumerable candles.

The most barbaric of the Christian ceremonies is the "Washing of the Feet" by the Abyssinians. The congregation themselves, tall, thin, graceful, classically draped, leaning on their long praying-staves, are in themselves a sight worth

seeing. After various readings, prayers, and chantings a little less inharmonious than those of the Armenians, the chief priest indued certain vestments of green, magenta, and blue, richly embroidered with gold. The preparations for the washing consisted of a zinc bath containing water in which floated some olive branches, a deal table, and a rush-bottomed chair. After much searching for the right place in their books, they read some prayers, then carrying a cross, a beautiful antique silver censer decorated with little bells, and a book, they marched three times round the bath. The high-priest, the bath having been put on the floor, from which the Kidderminster carpet had been carefully removed, squatted before it, and proceeded to wash the feet and hands, first of the priests, then of such of the laity as desired it, with the olive branches. The standers-by howled in concert during the ceremony. The priests finally proceeded to the interior of the sanctuary and partook of the Lord's Supper; some of them afterwards, issuing forth with cross and incense, performed a sort of waltz. In reply to a question as to why they washed so many peoples' feet they said, "Christ did not limit the number to twelve."

On the Day of Atonement the Jewish sacrifice is a white cock, which they kill by taking hold of its neck and whirling it round their heads. The Feast of Tabernacles lasts eight days, during which the Jews parade the streets dressed in their best, which is generally richly-coloured plush or even white satin. On the last day we went to two synagogues, and in both were well received and accommodated with seats, though in one a tipsy man vociferated, "Turn them out." The synagogues are dirty and tawdry, and were crowded with men and women, the latter on high seats round the walls, the former dancing in a circle on the centre of the floor. The dancers' arms were placed on each other's shoulders, two being in the middle, all with their best dresses on, most with cigarettes in their mouths. The music was supplied by a drum, a flute, and cymbals. When the Holy of Holies was opened the rolls of the law were taken out and handed to each of the adult male members of the congregation in turn, carried round the synagogue, and kissed amid a frantic dance to music of an extremely festive nature. This continued for a long time, the noise, strange dancing of the fur-capped men, who if not tipsy were certainly very

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excited, the evil-smelling lamps, and kerchiefed women and children, producing an impression not easily forgotten.

The Jewish Passover I have already described, so I will not burden this already lengthy description of religious ceremonies with another. An Ashkenazim Jew, in whose house I once saw the ceremony, explained that most Jews do not expect a renewal of living sacrifices, which were only instituted to satisfy the ideas of a people newly redeemed from idolatry, and that the Passover Lamb was killed in order to show their abhorrence of the worship of animals by the Egyptians. The Messiah, he said, cannot come till there is perfect peace over earth, as prophesied by Isaiah.

The most picturesque and interesting of the Mohammedan ceremonies is the Pilgrimage to Neby Musâ. A few years ago no Christian was permitted to see it, now it may be seen by all who care to look. Arabs carrying silken banners and playing cymbals and drums, soldiers with their band, dancing Dervishes with daggers stuck in their cheeks, singing Dervishes brandishing sticks, gaily costumed spectators piled up on the slopes of the hills and on the

walls, veiled women uttering the peculiar shrill cry which with them denotes either pain or pleasure, make up a most remarkable scene, second only in interest to the Pilgrimage to Mecca. On this occasion the brilliant scene was illuminated by fierce sunshine, and the firing of cannon reverberated loudly along the slopes of Olivet. The dancing fanatics got excited, and were set upon by the soldiery with whips and the butt-ends of their muskets till peace was restored. As usual, the procession returned after reaching a flag set up a little beyond Gethsemane, a few only of the most fervid devotees continuing so far as the Tomb of the Prophet Moses, which Mohammedans have located on this side of the Dead Sea.

But the most touching ceremony of all in Jerusalem is that simple gathering which the small Protestant congregation hold by lamplight in the Garden of Gethsemane at Easter. After a short service at Christ Church they walk slowly through the vision-haunted city, which also knew the footsteps of Christ, out at St. Stephen's gate, which He too may have entered, and treading the stony slopes of the Mount of Olives, they reach the Garden of Gethsemane. A few hymns are sung, a few heart-felt prayers uttered—that is all.

CHAPTER IX

JERUSALEM—THE HARÂM

"A crown of crowns infinitely sacred, infinitely beautiful."—BEN HUR.

ONE-SIXTH of the space enclosed by the present walls of Jerusalem is occupied by the Harâm es Sherif, the "noble sanctuary," and is the site formerly covered by the successive temples of Solomon, Nehemiah, and Herod. There is much to be done before the traveller can enter its sacred courts, which the "trivial tripper" would scarcely care to go through for himself alone; it is best to make the visit with a party, much expense and trouble being thus avoided. The intending visitor must apply to his consul for a ticket of admission, the consul hands him over to a Kowass, and the Kowass, stalking proudly before him with a whip in his hand, in turn secures the service of a somewhat ragged Turkish soldier, who will probably shuffle after him in slippers. So he passes through some of the quaint streets of

Jerusalem amid cries of "Backsheesh! backsheesh!" but little modified by the presence of his escort, to this great sanctuary of Mohammedan fanaticism.

Passing out of a long, vaulted archway, called the Bazaar of the Cotton Merchants, the traveller sees at a glance the whole of the area of the Harâm dotted over with exquisite monuments and groups of cypress and olive trees. It is enclosed by strong battlemented walls five feet six inches in thickness. Marble steps, terminated by elegant arcades, from which the Arabs say the scales are to be suspended at the day of judgment, lead to a kind of platform, in the centre of which rises the Kubbet-es-Sakhrah or Dome of the Rock, one of the noblest edifices of Islam worship, being perhaps second only to the magnificent Mosque of Cordoba.

Here some pertinacious boys, with slippers in their hands, assail the visitor; of course he must don some covering for his shoes before entering the holy place. The "slippers" are generally pieces of sacking or canvas, which the boys tie over the shoes, whispering "Backsheesh, backsheesh," as they do so.

During the reigns of the earliest Arabian Khalifs Mecca was the established place of resort for Mohammedan pilgrims as it is now. When revolts broke out against the Ommayad Khalifs, however, they, for political reasons connected with the rapid increase of their dominions, determined to establish a rival place of pilgrimage. For this purpose Abd-el-Melik, whose reign extended between the years 685 and 705 A.D., chose the temple of Jerusalem, "sacred in the eyes of the Moslems as connected with the acts and revelations of Moses, of Jesus, and of Mahomet, and as being surrounded by the tombs of the prophets. He caused this sacred edifice to be enlarged so as to include within its walls the steps upon which the Khalif Omar prayed on the surrender of that city. It was thus converted into a mosque, and the venerable and sanctified stone called Jacob's Pillar, on which the patriarch is said to have had his dream, was presented for the kisses of pilgrims, in like manner as the black stone of Caaba."

"The Dome of the Rock is built over the most sacred part of Jerusalem; it has been a special object of attraction from remote anti-

quity, and around it cling many remarkable traditions. On account of its exquisite and manifold variety of decoration, symmetry of form, and the mystery of the great rock over which it stands, the building is acknowledged to be one of the most beautiful in the world, and it occupies a position of unique interest. No wonder it is watched so carefully and guarded so jealously, for no other part of the world has such a glorious history." [1]

The building is octagonal in form, and richly encrusted with tiles and marbles; the Dome itself is of a peculiarly elegant form. A corridor runs round the interior, divided from the centre by very fine marble columns taken from older edifices. Within is another row of pillars connected by an iron screen of fine workmanship, within that again is an enclosure wherein rises the celebrated Rock. The decoration of the Dome is extremely rich, but can only be seen in detail on a very sunny day. The windows, the tracery of every one of which is different, are filled with coloured glass, which in lustre resembles precious stones. Unfor-

[1] "The Successors of Mahomet," W. Irving.

tunately the capitals of the columns have been newly regilt, and will be out of harmony with the rest of the interior till Time can put his mellow finishing touches to them.

The traditions are known to all readers that on this Rock Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, that it was the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, that on it is written the great and unspeakable name of God, and that beneath it the Ark of the Covenant concealed by Jeremiah still lies buried. According to the latest opinions, the probability is that the great sacrificial altar of the Temple stood here, and the fact that traces of a channel for carrying off the blood of the victims have been discovered, seems to support the suggestion. The Rock is of an irregular shape, more than fifty feet in width, irregular in height, but rising in some places to six feet and a half. It bears traces of steps having been cut in it.

The Mohammedans say this Rock had the intention of following Mahomet to heaven on the night when he made his memorable ascent there, but it was held down by the angel Gabriel, in proof of which they show the marks left by his fingers: they show also Mahomet's

footprints, marks which once were shown as those of Christ.

The visitor descends a few steps, and, in a chamber resembling a cave, is asked to believe that he sees the praying places of Solomon, Abraham, Mahomet, David, and Elijah. Mahomet has also left the mark of his head on the under side of the Rock, to judge from which his skull must have measured two feet in diameter; and through it is also a hole made by the same potent prophet's body when he ascended to Paradise. The curious little marble pillars, which resemble the twisted roots of trees, branches forming the capitals, are the remains of altars erected in the Dome of the Rock by the Crusaders when they held possession of the Holy City.

But the *pièce de resistance* of the guide (who is a sheik—there is a sheik to every building, nearly each one of whom has to be propitiated by backsheesh paid by the Kowass) is a little square of green marble, in which are nineteen holes, four of which are occupied by three nails and a half. He tells you that Mahomet drove these nails in, one falls out every hundred years, and when all are gone the end of the

world will happen. The devil succeeded in destroying all but these you see, when he was fortunately stopped by the ubiquitous angel Gabriel. After repeating this story the guide declared that if we laid some backsheesh for him on this stone, we should certainly go to Paradise when we died.

Leaving the Kubbet-es-Sakhrah, before you stands an elegant little building, covered with a dome and lined with rich mosaic, called "David's Place of Judgment." It is said to have served as a model for the larger building. The platform on which these and many other edifices stand covers a number of vast cisterns containing water enough to supply the whole city, but Mohammedans only are permitted to make use of it.

There is supposed to be an underground connection between the Harâm and Mecca. A tale is told of a beggar who dropped the cocoanut-basin in which he collected alms down the holy well at Mecca. It was picked up at the Bir Eyub or Well of Job by some natives of Silwân, who took it to the mosque, where it was hung up. The beggar who had dropped it afterwards visiting the mosque, saw his own

basin there, identified it by a small hollow in the bottom concealing some coins, claimed and received it. Similar tales are told of the greyhound well at Kairwân, the holy city near Tunis.

The Kubbet-es-Sakhrah is not a mosque, it is simply a covering for the Sacred Rock. The mosque of the holy area is called Aksa, and is the remains of a church erected in honour of the Virgin by the Emperor Justinian. The design is simple like that of all the early Christian churches, but the columns of the nave are only plaster, and the walls are white-washed; however, the apse is very rich in mosaic decorations. Some detestable paintings of landscapes have been daubed on the large arch of the transept and walls under the beautiful windows. The pulpit (*mimbar*) is of cedar of Lebanon, the most exquisite specimen of its kind in the world. It is inlaid with mother-of-pearl, but unfortunately an inscription from the Korân which runs through the tracery has been picked out in white paint. There are two Mirrabs, one in the apse, another in what is called the Chapel of Jesus; both are of very fine marble mosaic. In this

mosque, as in that of Amr, in old Cairo, are two columns, between which whoever can pass is sure to gain Paradise. They are now closed with iron bars in consequence of a too-anxious devotee having killed himself in the effort to squeeze through.

The inner bars of some of the windows are hung with shreds of rag as tokens of the fulfilment of certain vows; from one window is a fine view of the Mount of Olives and Valley of Jehosaphat, from another may be seen the large reservoir thought to be the Pool of Bethesda, until the discovery of a more likely site in the grounds of the Pères Blancs, which I shall describe later. This, which is called the Birket-el-Israil, is three hundred and sixty-five feet in length by one hundred and twenty-six feet in width. It is dry, and the bottom covered with rubbish.

The summer pulpit outside the Mosque El Aksa is a very beautiful and unique specimen of Saracenic work, the fact of the bases of the columns being smaller than the shafts gives an appearance of lightness and elegance. The vast substructions, called "the Stables of Solomon," to which you descend by steps ten

inches in height, were once used by the Crusaders for the same purpose, and the holes cut in the corners of the pillars to which their horses were tied may still be seen. Passing the Mosque of Abraham you see the so-called "Cradle of Christ," a marble niche, lying horizontally.

The Golden gate has traces of very fine ornamentation of Byzantine origin; the colour of the stone is a particularly rich yellow. As is well known, it is now built up. Christ is said to have entered by this gate when the people strewed palms on His way, crying, "Hosanna to the son of David!" The Turks have a strong belief that when Jerusalem is conquered the victor will enter by it. The gate in its present form dates from the fifth or seventh century after Christ. Returning towards one of the entrances we looked through a grating at something covered with green drapery. This is the so-called throne of Solomon, from the legend that Solomon was found dead here. "In order to conceal his death from the demons, he supported himself on his seat with his staff, and it was not till the worms had gnawed his staff through and

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caused the body to fall, that the demons became aware they were now released from the King's authority."[1]

Our guide called the building the "Tomb of Solomon."

Going out, the foundations of the Castle of Antonia, a mass of natural rock, may be observed. The superstructure now serves as barracks.

The architect in charge of the Harâm, Baron von Schick, has made some very interesting models of the Temple area from observations and measurements taken on the spot, for which he has had exceptional opportunities. His model takes to pieces, and one sees first the natural rock, then his restorations of Solomon's Temple and of Herod's, and lastly the Harâm in its present condition.

From the outside wall of the Harâm a pillar built into it projects over the Valley of the Kedron. Here Mahomet will sit in judgment at the last day. The belief of orthodox Mohammedans is that a hair will be stretched thence to the Mount of Olives, and the brook Kedron will roar below. Good Moslems will come first of all for judgment, and will find no difficulty

[1] Baedeker.

whatever in crossing this hair into Paradise. Then the Jews will come, try to climb up to the line, and failing, will call on Moses to help them. Moses will reply he cannot, and they will all be swept away in the torrent. Next the Christians will fail to climb, and call on Christ to help them. He too will say He cannot, and they also will be swept away. Then Moslems who have been wicked will come up for judgment, and will call on Moses first for aid. Moses will reply, "I could not help my own people, how then can I help you?" They will then call on Christ, and receive a similar answer. Last of all they will call on Mahomet, who will mercifully turn them into fleas and himself into a ram. He will say, "Now jump into my wool," and run with them across the hair into Paradise.

Could anything in the world be more interesting than to wander alone freely about these time-hallowed precincts, with the Bible and Josephus in hand, trying to identify the sites where the events and scenes they chronicle took place? This satisfaction is denied the Christian pilgrim, as he may not enter without the preliminaries I have described, and then

accompanied by a Kowass and a soldier, though entrance is free to the meanest of Mohammedans.

Here in imagination we may behold the glories of King Solomon, see the Jews under Nehemiah rebuilding the walls—trowel in one hand, the sword in the other; hear the shock of the glittering legions of Titus as they thunder at the gates, and draw back in terror at the volumes of flame rolling heavenwards which destroyed the noble Temple of Herod, while Jews run shrieking to the caves below as the horses of the conqueror wade knee-deep in blood. Then come Crusader and Moslem deluging the plain again with slaughter, in their turn intolerant and fanatical, till imagination, horrified, demands of the future if contending armies shall again defile this peaceful scene with blood, or shall the calm voice of reason in the contest yet to come prevail? as it should do in the last years of the dying nineteenth century.

CHAPTER X

JERUSALEM—TOMBS

PALESTINE is essentially a land of caverns and tombs, and at Jerusalem they are located more thickly than in any other part of it. Natural caves abound in the country, and it has been comparatively easy to enlarge them and excavate others in the friable limestone of which the hills are composed. If we add to this that the Jews brought a taste for tombs excavated in the natural rock from Egypt, where the most magnificent examples of such sepulchres still exist as entire and fresh as on the day when the last workmen put aside their chisels and paint-pots, we have probably the reasons why these gruesome monuments are so abundant in the Holy Land. When the Romans conquered the Jews, they brought with them the fashion already learned from their adversaries[1] of cave interment, and so the practice, begun so early as the days when the weeping

[1] Gaston Boissier, "Archæological Rambles."

Abraham buried his wife Sarai in the cave of Machpelah, continued long after Herod laid his murdered Mariamne in the tomb which still excites our wonder and admiration.

The most carefully constructed of these dwelling-places of the dead in Jerusalem is that commonly known as the "Tomb of the Kings," but thought by savants to be the burial-place of Queen Helena of Adiabene, a convert to Judaism, who lived during the first century of the Christian era. The French Government has purchased this property, walled it in, and placed it under the charge of a custodian.

Descending some spacious steps, in both sides of the walls are perceived channels conveying water to a large cistern below them; in the steps also are channels cut for the same purpose. The way in which these conduits pass from one level to another should be remarked. Reaching a court at the bottom of the steps, and passing under a lofty portal, a vast quadrangle ninety feet long and eighty-one feet wide is entered—the whole is cut in the natural rock.

On one side of this court is a vestibule, the pediment of which, borne by two columns, bears traces of elaborate mouldings and carvings; on

the left of this vestibule is the entrance to the tombs. When first discovered it was closed by a rolling stone.[1] This is a round flat stone about four feet in diameter, somewhat resembling a mill-stone, running from one side of the door into a groove opposite cut to receive it. The door which it closes is five feet lower than the level of the ground, and approached through a cutting; on the left of the cutting is a low concealed passage, leading also to the door, by which a man could enter to roll back the stone, which he did by using wooden wedges. The whole mechanism was originally covered by slabs of stone so as to completely conceal the means of entrance.

As the Hebrews buried treasure with their dead, they employed all kinds of resources to render their tombs secure.

The door opens on a passage three feet in height (it will be remembered that Mary Magdalene *stooped down* to look into the sepulchre), passing through which a chamber nineteen feet square is entered, which would seem to have been used as a place of assembly for relatives and others on the occasion of a funeral. Some persons think they perceive traces

[1] Matt. xxvii. 60, 66; xviii. 2: Mark xvi. 34: Luke xxiv. 2.

of fire-worship here. In this room are four entrances leading to as many tomb-chambers containing numerous rock-shelves and shaft-tombs. A stone staircase in one angle leads to a still lower series of chambers and tombs.

The courage of those ladies who, alone except for their dragomans, visit these dark, dangerous, and solitary places cannot be commended. Many very unpleasant adventures have occurred in consequence, and such conduct is greatly to be deplored. *Verbum sap.*

One hot Sunday afternoon in July we took a walk to the so-called Tombs of the Judges. Passing the ash-heaps which the ingenious imaginations of dragomans have converted from the refuse of a soap factory into the ashes of the sacrifices of the Temple, and a custom-house the size of a sentry-box, where a Turk sits looking out for taxable articles, we soon turned into a very wild and rough road. Stony and bare, it winds among barren hills, with here and there a stunted olive, and is so rough as to be only fit for donkeys' feet. These hills are pierced with the square entrances of tombs on every side, for here begins the Valley of Jehoshaphat, where was the ancient burying-place of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

On the top of one of these hills on this particular day stood a magnificently caparisoned steed, mounted by an imposing-looking sheik; with flowing draperies and fully armed, his figure clear cut against the sky, he was as romantic a looking personage as one could well see anywhere. On perceiving us, he left his horse in the hands of a goat-herd pasturing his flock near by, and finding us in search of a certain tomb, courteously offered to be our guide. The dignified old gentleman was minus the forefinger of his right hand, having in all probability chopped it off to avoid military service. He led us to the tomb we wanted, which stands among many others in a street of tombs; in fact, the whole district for miles around is honeycombed with sepulchres cut in the solid rock.

In front of the Tombs of the Judges are traces of a large court; the vestibule to the tombs themselves has a very richly-carved pediment. A door in the vestibule, over which is more ornamentation much mutilated, leads to the first chamber, which is eighteen feet square, containing two rows of shaft-tombs; at the back and on the right-hand side are similar chambers, and in two of the angles steps by which to descend to other rooms which contain still more loculi. All these are cut

in the natural rock, and this may be taken as a type of the innumerable sepulchres round about.

Here the magnificent sheik who had accompanied us, seeing his services no longer required, demanded backsheesh, and on receipt of a bishlik, which he passed from hand to hand with the air of a London cabman on receipt of his just fare, suddenly disappeared as it were into the earth. The defile was as romantic, and the few people we met as savage as those in the farthest deserts of Syria, yet we were within an hour's walk of the walls of Jerusalem.

Beyond these tombs a ride may be taken to Lifta, probably the Nephtoah of Joshua xv. 9, the inhabitants of which have to suffer, not undeservedly, the reputation of being thieves; the two criminals crucified beside Christ are said to have been natives of this village. Built of rocks, on rocks, it is difficult to distinguish it in the distance from the hill-side on which it hangs. The valley beneath is fertile, being watered by a spring, for only where there are springs is there any fertility in Palestine. The village is entered by archways so low the traveller must lie on his horse's back to pass through them, and the pedestrian stoops; even then it is difficult.

The so-called Tombs of the Prophets are on the Mount of Olives; there is no authority whatever for connecting them with the Prophets. They consist of a rotunda lighted dimly from above, from which a number of passages containing shaft-tombs radiate.

In the Valley of Jehoshaphat are three very curious tombs. Cut out of the solid rock, they are said to remind travellers who have seen them of the rock-hewn temples of Petra. One is called the Pillar of Absalom, from an idea that it is the monument referred to in 2 Samuel xviii. 18: "Now Absalom had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day Absalom's place." I have often in passing seen Jews pelt it with stones to express their detestation of Absalom's disobedience to his father. The curious monument in question, however, is not a pillar, but a tomb. The substructure is a square chamber, with half columns of the Doric order; above is a high roof shaped like an inverted funnel. The whole is more curious than beautiful.

Next to it is the so-called Grotto of St. James, the façade of which resembles a temple; behind it are numerous intricate passages leading to tombs. This is the most beautiful of these rock-hewn edifices.

The tomb of Zechariah, which stands next, is a cube of sixteen feet, cut out of the solid rock, and surmounted by a blunted pyramid. No entrance has yet been discovered.

These monuments are high up the hillside above the Kedron Valley; around, above, and below, the slopes are white with Jewish tombstones. Jews travel from the ends of the earth to lay their bones in this sacred soil. The hill on the other side of the valley, which is crowned by the walls of the Harâm, is covered with tombs of Moslems, who will not allow the hated Hebrew, even in death, to encroach on their boundaries.

A very handsome tomb was discovered by accident two years ago on some land called the Nicopherieh, belonging to the Greek Church, and is yet but little known to tourists. A native suspected of being a thief was watched and observed always to disappear at a certain spot. On careful examination a hole in the rock was discovered which led to a rock-hewn

chamber, where a quantity of stolen goods were hidden.

To visit it we had a long and difficult search for the priestly custodian, who was occupied in superintending the olive harvest. A fore-court cut in the rock is first entered. In it are piled fragments of marble columns, mouldings, cornices, and capitals of coarse Roman workmanship. The tomb itself is entered through a door four feet in height, once closed by a huge rolling stone, still intact. This stone must be at least five feet in diameter and one foot in thickness. The grooves into which it fits are still to be seen, and of course it would close the arched doorway about three feet high most effectually. This, and that at the Tombs of the Kings, are, I believe, the only two specimens known of rolling stones *in situ.*

There is first an entrance chamber, out of which open three others, twenty feet square, from one of them a smaller chamber is entered, all cut in the living rock. The larger chambers are lined with fine limestone blocks accurately fitted without mortar, and the ceiling is the rock covered with cement. All is in good preservation. The greatest attractions, however, are two

beautiful marble sarcophagi, which were discovered in one of the larger chambers, and are still lying where they were found. One is of the most exquisite workmanship. Unfortunately the lid, which is broken, does not match it, though it fits, being decorated with a very inferior style of ornamentation. All the rooms have strong stone doors, now thrown down, probably by marauding Arabs.

This tomb has been identified, I know not with how much probability, as the tomb of Mariamne, the too-beloved wife of Herod the Great. If it be indeed the last resting-place of that proud and beautiful woman, who went to her death with a haughty composure worthy of the noblest of Jewish heroines, it indeed possesses intense interest.

In the vineyard of a Turkish acquaintance of ours, on the way to the Tombs of the Kings, stands a very good specimen of the ordinary rock-tomb. The proprietor and his family were at the time of our visit living in little tents pitched before it, to escape the intense heat of the city. The tomb has a court and antechambers, the latter entered by a doorway cut in the rock about twelve feet high. In the first chamber are the

usual loculi and shaft-tombs. A doorway three feet high leads on the right to a similar chamber. Staircases cut in the rock on each side of the first chamber descend to other rooms below. In one of them, on the door of which we were told an inscription had been discovered, a vast quantity of human bones were lying hopelessly intermingled and broken by Arabs in search of pillage, principally rings. As each tomb had originally been closed by a thick stone door, great violence must have been used to force them open. One of the lower rooms is now utilised as a cistern. In the first or antechamber was an oblong depression, perhaps the place in which the bodies of the dead were washed. The proprietor informed us that a number of curiosities had been lately discovered in the tombs in this locality.

In such a stony country as Judæa a grave of earth would be difficult to find, so the Jews were almost obliged to bury their dead in the rocks. As it produces so little wood they used no coffins. The destruction of wood commencing with the numerous wars which have desolated this unhappy country still continues, the Arabs grubbing up the old roots to sell for firewood, and animals being allowed to browse on the young shoots.

The picturesque Protestant cemetery is situated on a slope of Mount Zion, near Bishop Gobat's schools. It contains two ruined Roman baths, covered in by arches which still remain. The graves are numerous, and it is the intention of the present bishop to enlarge it by enclosing another portion of the hill, already purchased.

CHAPTER XI

WANDERINGS IN AND ABOUT JERUSALEM

Carriage driving is impossible within the walls of Jerusalem, and the traveller must perforce thread its mazy streets on donkey-back or on foot. Outside the gates two and three horse vehicles may be hired for some of the excursions, but I have always preferred to walk as much as possible, so that I might be able to come in contact with the people, peep into obscure corners, tarry where I wished, and avoid sights and scents not exactly pleasing to the eye and nostrils. So if the reader who has accompanied me so far to those places around which the sublime interests of this marvellous city chiefly cling will have the patience to follow me to localities less remarkable, we will in imagination take a few desultory excursions on foot together.

In David Street we pass the corn-market, where the manner of measuring corn may be studied to advantage, throwing light, as it does,

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on several passages of Scripture. It is thus well described by the Rev. James O'Neil, M.A. (It must be noticed that the buyer of the corn is also the measurer.) "He (the buyer) seats himself cross-legged on the ground, and begins to scoop the grain into the measure with his hands. Next he seizes the measure when it is partly full, and gives it two or three swift half turns as it stands on the ground, thus shaking it together, and so making it occupy a smaller space. He again scoops in more corn, and repeats the shaking as before, and does so again and again until the measure is filled up to the brim. This done he presses it all over with the outstretched palms of his hands, using the whole weight of his body so as to pack it still more closely. Then out of the centre of the pressed surface he removes some of its contents and makes a small hollow. He is about to erect a building, and very naturally digs a foundation. With more handfuls of corn he now raises a cone above the measure. With much skilfulness he carries this cone up to a great height, until no more grain can possibly be piled on its steep sides, and that which he adds begins to run down and flow over. Upon this the interesting and elaborate process is complete.

'Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom,' that is, into the capacious natural breast-pocket formed by that part of the loose Eastern kamise or shirt, which is above the girdle."

The Via Dolorosa, the way by which Christ is said to have borne His cross to Golgotha, is a series of tortuous streets, over-arched in many places, and, even if they were in the authentic direction, are thirty-five feet above the level of the city during His lifetime. It must also be taken for granted, if we accept this route, that the site of Calvary is also correctly ascertained, as it leads directly to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Pilgrims make a point of passing along these streets and praying at each of the fourteen stations, which are indicated by tablets on the walls. To see them is to plunge back at once into the Middle Ages. Indeed, Jerusalem savours but little of the nineteenth century.

The second station is marked by a modern-looking arch called the Ecco Homo Arch; it is supposed to span the spot where Pilate uttered the words "Behold the man!" (John xix. 5). On the left is the institution of the Sisters of Zion; we enter, and are politely received by one

of them. We see in their beautiful church a veritable old arch, discovered in the course of rebuilding. Two out of three arches are visible, one being much larger than the other; in the smaller is a niche for a statue. They have the appearance of having been thrown down and rebuilt, the material being evidently old; the effect is terribly injured by a tawdry altar placed directly in front. In the vaults are portions of the pavement of a Roman road; one huge block is scored by the marks of a game played by Roman soldiers, and in vogue among Arabs to-day, also fragments of massive walls supposed to be the remains of the Prætorium. Here, if anywhere, it is said, is the last path trodden by Christ on His way to be crucified, and the last arch under which He passed.

Going onward in the direction of St. Stephen's gate we reach the Church of St. Anne and monastery of the Pères Blancs, an Order founded by the late Cardinal Lavigérie for African mission work. The white robes of the monks are admirably adapted to this hot climate. Many a time ten and twelve miles from Jerusalem I have met the good fathers marching along with about one hundred youths, whom they are training,

singing lustily the litany of the Virgin as they went.

This Order is in possession of the Pool of Bethesda, which they have excavated at their own expense. Far below the present surface of the ground are the remains of vast pillars sustaining a lofty portico, and a flight of steps leading down to a pool of water. Its authenticity as opposed to the Birket-el-Israil, which I have already alluded to, and which for hundreds of years has been supposed to be identical with the Pool of Bethesda, seems established by the discovery of several *ex voto* offerings in the water. One is a marble foot inscribed "Lucilia Pompilia," probably the name of a lady who was cured by these waters of a disease in the feet; another discovered here is in Paris—these facts proving at least that the pool was believed to possess healing qualities in the time of the Romans. Slight traces may also be seen of a fresco representing an angel troubling the water. A church was built over the pool by the Crusaders, the remains of which have been discovered and partially excavated, showing that at that date also this pool was thought to be the scene of the miracle.

The Church of St. Anne, in the same enclosure,

is the most perfect and beautiful specimen of a Crusaders' church in the Holy City. The great Saracenic hero, Saladin, established a school in this building, and to this circumstance it owes its preservation; it has also been judiciously restored. Descending into the crypt, we are shown a cave cut in the natural rock, and are told that it was the house of St. Joachim and St. Anne, and the birthplace of the Virgin Mary. I inwardly marvel why most of the events commemorated by the building of a church occurred underground, and pass on to remark a marble tablet recording the "dedication of his heart to the Virgin" by an anonymous person, "in gratitude for his conversion from Protestantism."

We will now pass out of St. Stephen's gate and continue our walk over the Mount of Olives, a walk which none other in the world can equal in interest.

The round hills before us on which a few olives and wild flowers grow, dotted here and there with the erections of pious communities, are replete with religious traditions. Almost in front of the gate is the low-roofed Crusaders' church, which covers the Virgin's tomb. Going down a broad flight of forty-seven marble steps, on the

right hand is a subterranean chapel richly adorned with cloth of gold and silver lamps; thence we pass under a very low doorway into a smaller chapel, where is a slab of white marble like that in the Holy Sepulchre, with, of course, an altar above it; it marks the place where the Virgin is said to have been buried before her Assumption. The tombs of St. Joachim, St. Anne, and St. Joseph are also located in the same church.

Lepers take up their quarters near the door and persistently assail visitors for alms; lining both sides of the road and crawling in the dust, they literally shriek "Backsheesh!"

Christians will view with mingled feelings the Garden of Gethsemane. That the agony of the Great Master took place somewhere in this locality may well be believed; but the precise spot cannot possibly be ascertained, as is evidenced by the fact that both the Greek and Latin Churches have located it in different places. The Latin garden is walled in and placed under the charge of Franciscan monks, who carefully tend the trees and flowers. On the walls are the stations of the cross, and in a small chapel is a good marble relief of the Agony in the Garden. The visitor questions whether the eight most venerable olive-

trees may or may not be those which existed there in the time of Christ; they cannot be the veritable trunk and branches, but may possibly be descendants of them, as olives propagate themselves by suckers from the roots, which gradually replace the parent tree.

A little higher up the mount stands a Russian church with characteristic domes, erected as a memorial to the grandmother of the Emperor. We were told he wished to inter her remains here, but to pay them due respect a few Russian soldiers would be necessary, and he has not yet obtained permission from the Sultan to send them to Jerusalem. The church contains some tolerable paintings, two of which are by Verestschagin.

Following a very steep ascent we come to the Chapel of the Ascension, a round building adorned with beautiful little marble pillars. It is somewhat shocking to be shown footprints of Christ in the rock. The chapel belongs to the Moslems, but Latins, Greeks, Armenians, Copts, and Syrians hold services here. The event commemorated could not have taken place on this spot, because we are informed in the Gospel of St. John that "He led them out as far as Bethany, and He was

parted from them and carried up into heaven," and Bethany is a mile and a half away.

Perhaps at this point the traveller may feel a little wearied of traditional sites and ecclesiastical localities. Be it so, yet let him remember that though all else be false, he is at least standing on the veritable Mount of Olives, sanctified by the footsteps of the Great Teacher, whose brief life on earth hallowed wherever He passed; and that though the hand of man has marred the sacred mount with masses of bad architecture built over dozens of unauthenticated sites, still nature remains the same. This mountain was as stony and sterile, the valley at its base as dry and rocky, the walls of Jerusalem rose as white in the sunlight on the same hill, when He, like us, looked on the varying scene; the same changeful sky hung above His head, the same wild flowers kissed His feet, the same winds lifted the hem of His garments, as now we see and feel. Let us then have patience; in all the wash-dirt of tradition there must be at least *one* speck of the gold of truth.

The view of Jerusalem from here is very fine; it includes the whole of the Harâm area, whose walls rise high above the valley of the

Kedron, down which is seen the old village of Silwân (Siloam) clinging fondly to its parent rock; beyond is the Hill of Offence, the "high place before Jerusalem," on which King Solomon set up idols. Looking backwards over the shoulders of the barren piled-up hills, we catch a glimpse of the Dead Sea, sparkling like glass in the vivid sunlight, and the dim green valley which marks the course of the Jordan.

A strict Order of Carmelite nuns, whose features no mortal outside their convent may ever more gaze upon, have a church near the summit of the Mount of Olives, said to mark the spot where the Lord's Prayer was composed; around its neat little cloister the words are inscribed in thirty-two different languages. When the nuns attend mass, they do so in a recess beside the altar, covered with an iron grating, having long projecting spikes, iron bars, and a thick curtain. So I think they are tolerably secure from man's polluting gaze. The church owes its erection to a Princess Latour d'Auvergne, whose monument, a recumbent marble figure, may be seen in the quadrangle.

Crossing the courtyard in front, amid black

lilies and scarlet anemones, a few steps brings us to a kind of grotto, where we are told the Apostles' Creed was composed.

On the summit of the mount the Russians have erected a tower ascended by two hundred and fourteen steps, up an iron corkscrew staircase which trembles under every footfall. From the top one of the most interesting, if not the most interesting, view in the world may be obtained, but even so, that such a barbarous erection should be placed on the Mount of Olives is much to be deplored. The Dead Sea lies in its cradle of mountains three thousand feet below; the mouth of the Jordan, where it leaves the sea, and its course for many miles, through faint green shrubs, may be traced; the ever-varying mountains of Moab crowned by Mount Nebo, where Moses died, lie beyond; Jerusalem, sitting amid her hills, is spread out like a map, the vast wilderness of Judæa beyond; the mosque which covers the mountain tomb of the prophet Samuel, a few houses of Bethany, and the more distant Bethlehem, lie dim on the horizon; the Mount of Offence, Viri Galilee, and Bethphage are also included in the range of vision. I have stood

in the Acropolis of Athens, in the Forum of Rome, and amid the giant temples of mysterious Egypt, but none of those scenes can vie in interest with this, hallowed as it is by the memory of Him who was "despised and rejected of men."

We descend, and while we are gazing thus lost in thought on the marvellous panorama, the shadows of the grey Judæan hills have grown longer and longer, and evening has extinguished the last golden glimmer which hovered around their brows. The hawks and vultures which soar in the air are turning their pinions homewards, and ever and anon a soft-winged bat crosses our path. Pariah dogs awaken and commence another hideous meal on the body of a camel or mule which was left to die where it fell by an ungrateful master. All reminds us that it is time to return, and we know it is not wise to linger outside the walls of Jerusalem alone on foot after the sun has set. So we will hasten home, our hearts filled with tender memories of a never-to-be-forgotten picture, and wait the coming of another day to renew our wanderings.

Many a brilliant moonlight night have I ridden in the company of friends up the steep

path of the Mount of Olives, through the little village on its summit, along the brow of Scopus, amid vineyards where hung the dead bodies of the foxes, "the little foxes that eat the grapes," down into the deep valley which holds the tomb of Simon the Just, and so back into Jerusalem. The view of Jerusalem from the village, looking back on the city, is sublime. It lies in its protecting walls sleeping and solitary, faint and grey with no other light but what the moon and stars afford, and is wrapped in sombre silence, only broken by the baying of the pariah dogs. The vast space of the Harâm lies to the left, the dome of the Sakhrah glittering weirdly in the moonlight. A few of the white roofs and tiny domes of the surrounding houses catch a ray of light, the others lie hidden in blackest shadow, the minarets stand up like tall white ghosts against the dark blue sky. All around are hills, some mysteriously veiled, others brilliant in the cold, clear beams, but all beautiful exceedingly.

"Dolce e chiarae la notte e senza vento
E queta sovra i tetti e in mezzo agli orli
Posa la luna, e di lontan rivela
Serena ogui montagna."

So He who once wept over Jerusalem may also have seen it exceeding fair in the calm light of the moon, when Herod's Temple crowned the heights with its marble pillars, magnificent corridors, and vaulted terraces.

Here too came Titus followed by his glittering legions in all the pomp and panoply of war, and would have saved the doomed building had not the Jews themselves aided in its destruction. And here too, at a later date, came the Khalif Omar in his rude Arab garb exclaiming "Allah Achbar! God is mighty!" and to him also Jerusalem surrendered once more.

Looking the other way from the ridge on which you stand, a vast expanse of hilly country is seen, in which may be distinguished the low outlines of a village; it is Anâta (Anathoth), the birthplace of the prophet Jeremiah, and beyond, far more bright than any diamond in its setting, are the gleaming waters of the Dead Sea.

Night in the Holy Land is a thing to be remembered. The air is soft and balmy, neither hot nor cold; the sun, setting like a globe of amber, tinges the top of the blue vapour which ever hangs over the Moabite mountains and Dead Sea with iridescent tints.

The sky is literally powdered with stars, not gleaming as they do on a frosty night in the North, but soft and dreamy. There are many such nights there to which might be justly given that epithet which can so rarely be truthfully applied—perfect.

> "O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
> What man has borne before;
> Thou layest thy finger on the lips of care,
> And they complain no more."—LONGFELLOW.

Returning on Friday evenings—the eve of the Jewish Sabbath—the Jewish lights add their glamour to the scene. One is then lighted for each member of the family and placed in the windows of their houses; it is part of the principal duties of the women to attend to them.

In the gloom one evening as we re-entered Jerusalem, I saw a donkey with a burden on its back which I could not make out. Is it a sack? two sacks? No, then what is it? I see a leg, a hand. Come near, let us ask the driver what he carries. He takes off a covering and shows that the quivering form we cannot understand is the dead body of a negro still astride on the animal and fallen forward. "Mât," he says, "Mât, dead. Lêletak saîdeh! good evening."

CHAPTER XII

ROUND JERUSALEM

"The egotism of a traveller, however incessant, however shameless and obtrusive, must still convey some true ideas of the country through which he has passed."—EOTHEN.

LET us pause a little while, friend and fellow-traveller, beneath the grand old structure commonly called the Tower of David, before we set off on another occasion. Four-square and massive, defying the storms of nature and the more pitiless hand of man, it still stands as it has ever stood since the day when Titus bade his soldiers spare it, and let it remain a monument to his victory. Every stone in Jerusalem serves as a subject of dispute, and it is now said this tower is not the work of the Poet-King, but the tower of Phasael, erected by Herod in memory of his brother. Even an unpractised eye can discern where the fine old masonry of the Jew ends and the more careless work of the Saracen commences. The substructure is entirely solid.

It now forms part of the citadel, and the per-

mission of an officer is necessary to enter it. Crossing a shaky wooden bridge, and mounting some very ruined steps, you reach the top, where a magnificent view may be had. Everything in the interior is going to ruin; the stone steps are falling to decay, the guns rusting on their carriages, the soldiers' quarters utterly comfortless. A portion of the building is secluded as a harem for their wives.

Coming out, I am saluted by a Turkish acquaintance, who touches his head, heart, and feet, to signify that all these articles are at my service, which is the usual salutation. A week ago we visited the polite effendi, who did us the honour to conduct us to his house, and reconduct us to our own abode. Passing numerous unsavoury passages like entrances to caves, and always going up hill, we reached his dwelling, and were shown into a large and tolerably clean room, with divans running along three sides of it. Here we were presented to his wife, brother, brother's wife, sisters, mother, another brother's wife and his children, the ladies with naked feet, but gaily attired as to gowns, and wearing flowers in their hair. Tea made in a samovar was handed round in

English fashion, for the Turks in Jerusalem are becoming anglicised, and all managed to sit as we do except the grandmother, for whom this innovation appeared the one thing too much. The only incident startling to European ideas that occurred was, that when two or three of the ladies wanted to look out of window, they sprang lightly on and over the divans and stood on the broad window-sill. All were very polite, and to beguile the time, which often hangs so heavily in more distinguished assemblies, our host showed us a Turkish book, in which the genealogy of the Sultan was traced back to Saladin, Haroun al Raschid, Pharaoh, Noah, and Adam, and adorned with their portraits — in this also "making for" resemblance to folk more advanced in civilisation.

Let the reader pardon this digression to one who is a figure painter as well as a sketcher of landscapes.

We now go out of the fine old Jaffa gate with its crowd of passers, and turn to the left down the road which leads to Bethlehem and Hebron. Here is a good view of the city walls. On the right hand is a vast empty pool

called the Birket-es-Sultân (Sultan's Pool), and by biblical students the lower pool of Gihon, formed by a dam and bridge thrown across the lowest part of the Valley of Hinnom. In the dry bottom may be observed men seated on the rock, patiently crushing pieces of pottery to dust by rolling large stones to and fro; shreds of pottery are piled in little heaps around them. This, the practice of centuries, still continued, is referred to in the Bible, "Even so will I shiver this people and this city, as one shivers a potter's vessel that cannot be made whole again." Strange how immutable are the customs of Syria! to walk about in this land is like turning over a series of Bible illustrations; it seems doubtful if the Scriptures can ever be fully understood without an acquaintance with the country in which they were written.

These poor fellahin sit here day after day patiently rolling their heavy stones to and fro, children bringing them the broken fragments in baskets on their heads. The crushed pottery seems to make a very strong cement called "hamrâ," used for pointing the stone roofs of the domed houses, which must necessarily be made very water-tight, as every drop of rain is valu-

able in a land dependent for its water-supply on this source alone.

Following the course of the Valley of Hinnom we soon come to its lowest depression; here in old times stood the brazen image of Moloch, to which sacrifices of children were burnt; hence it was called Tophet or the Valley of Fire. At a later period the valley was called Gehenna by the Jews, whence is derived our word "hell." Here Arabs now turn out their animals past work to die of starvation and thirst, and so this valley is still of evil repute. The Apostles' Cavern on Aceldama contains numerous tomb-chambers, and the hill is pierced with tombs; the so-called Building of the Field of Blood seems to be an old cistern.

At the south-east corner of the valley is the mysterious well of En Rogel or Job's Well, once a boundary mark between the possessions of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. It sometimes overflows after heavy rain, and is then supposed to indicate a fruitful year; the inhabitants of Jerusalem make this a season of festivity, flocking in crowds to see so unusual a sight to them as running water. A dam was made by Hezekiah to stop the water in

case of a siege, and prevent the enemy having possession of it; this proving ineffectual, the water was conducted from the spring to a spot farther down the valley, and back again to Jerusalem. This conduit has been discovered, and was probably the "gutter" by which Joab entered the city.

The scene at the well is as lively as it always is at these places, the meeting ground for the gossips and idlers of the village. Arabs are great talkers, and here men and women may be seen shouting and quarrelling, till you wonder how the jars keep their balance on their excited heads. Six or seven men in primitive costumes, and very little of that, draw the water up in skin buckets, and fill the jars of the women, who carry them away as fast as it is drawn.

Above, like a portion of the rock itself, stands, or rather clings, the very primitive village of Silwân. One ride through its tortuous lanes is enough; the huts are very dirty; men, women, cows, donkeys, and children make a family party in the same room. Many of the houses are adaptations of rock-tombs. The inhabitants are a good-looking race, and though they have the reputation of being thieves, they

are probably no worse than their neighbours. Some of the pretty girls are disfigured by strings of coins hanging down both sides of the face.

On the side of the hill opposite the village is the Pool of Siloam. Dr. Bliss, the excavator to the Palestine Exploration Society, has here discovered portions of a wall, gate, and church, probably built by the Empress Eudoxia, he thinks. The exhalations are very bad, owing to the sewage of the city percolating through the immense heaps of rubbish undisturbed for centuries.

Looking up, the walls of the Harâm are far above, and you can perhaps realise that Josephus exaggerated but little when he wrote of this place, "The valley was very deep, and its bottom could not be seen if you looked from above into the depth. If one looked down from the battlements he would be giddy, while his sight could not reach to such an immense depth." The rich yellow wall creeps along the hills, over it peers one of the three palm-trees which Jerusalem boasts, the Aksa is near the angle, and the green and gold dome of the Kubbet-es-Sakhrah rises above all. This corner was the site of Captain Warren's excavations,

when, at a depth of seventy-eight feet, he discovered the foundations of one of Solomon's walls. The fine drafted blocks, sixteen and twenty feet long, still to be seen above ground, are part of the same wall.

Following the course of the valley we come to the Virgin's Fountain, so called from the legend that she once washed her infant's clothes there. The Arabs call it "Umm-ed-Derej," the Mother of Steps, from the number of steps leading down to it. It is an intermittent spring, because, the Arabs say, a dragon lives at the bottom who when he is awake stops the water, but when he is asleep it flows. Archæologists believe it to be the Upper Pool of Gihon, and the Dragon Well of Nehemiah.

The water is at the bottom of a double flight of steps; in the gloom may be seen the Silwâni women washing their linen, and filling the water-jars which they poise so dexterously on their heads. The act of carrying water is always one of the most graceful imaginable. I have remarked in many places the different ways in which it is done. A Capri woman puts her large jar on her head and supports it with one hand raised nearly to its brim, in Spain it is

carried on the hip, in Sicily one of the handles is held by a hand across the head, the jar being on the opposite shoulder, at Ain Karîm it is kept in its place by the two hands raised behind, while the women by the Nile balance the great weight without any support whatever. Boys and men when they carry jars, which is seldom, put them on their shoulders.

Farther down the valley a stone marks the supposed place of the martyrdom of St. James; the Latins have lately enclosed it with a large piece of ground recently purchased by them. The brook Kedron, by the side of which we are walking, is always dry except immediately after a very heavy rain, when a little water may sometimes be observed trickling down it.

It flows only once in two or three years. The water rises under some large stones below Bir Eyub, and rushes for a long distance down the valley. The inhabitants take advantage of this opportunity to wash themselves, their clothes, and their horses, and make a regular picnic. Coffee-stalls, where nargilehs may be hired, are set up beside the running water, and you may sit on the funny little stools the natives use so much and enjoy the scene.

The road we are now pursuing unites here with that which leads to Gethsemane, which we pass. We leave on the right the Mount of Olives and Mount Scopus, still scarred by the remains of the camp of Titus, and reach the Grotto where Jeremiah is supposed to have written his Lamentations, a vast cave with a huge pillar of natural rock in the centre. It is called by the Arabs "El Heiremyeh," which means Jeremiah. Above it is Skull Hill, which many besides General Gordon agree to regard as the true site of Calvary, "the green hill far away," now dotted with Mohammedan tombstones. It was first recognised as such by Otto Thenius in 1849, and, it is certain, the scene can best be pictured there by the traveller. In the dying light of evening the sight is romantic; from it the walls and houses of Jerusalem may be seen, and the continual traffic on the caravan road leading to Damascus. The tombs which crowd the summit consist of two slabs or terraces, surmounted by two upright stones, the top of one of which is carved into a tarbûsh or turban if the person commemorated be a man, or into an ornamental form if a woman.

Opposite is a door which opens in the rock

underlying the walls of the city. It is the entrance to the caves of Solomon, only lately discovered in looking for a stray dog. The stone for building the Temple is said to have been quarried in these vast caverns, the extent of which is still unknown. "And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them, and the stone squarers." On every side of the visitor yawn caverns and precipices; in many places may be seen the cuttings in the rock left by the masons, which, when filled with wood and saturated with water, rent the stone apart; there are also numberless little niches for lamps. The stone is a beautiful white limestone, very soft when wet, but hardening on exposure to the air. A huge column of this stone, forty feet long and five feet in diameter, lies in the ground of the Russian church; it is said to have been commenced for the Temple, and, on account of a flaw, abandoned before it was severed from the parent rock.

Two years ago, there being then no door to the entrance to this cavern, an American who had entered to explore it fell down one of the precipices; his body was not discovered till after a search of three weeks.

We now cross the great caravan road to Damascus. A few minutes' walk from this spot a mukari or muleteer was murdered and robbed of his money and donkeys. People who passed and saw the corpse lying by the roadside dared not give information to the authorities for fear of being themselves accused of the deed, and for three days the body remained where it fell. Some men in Jericho recognised the donkeys in the possession of Arabs there, gave information to the police, and were promptly arrested. By means of the omnipotent backsheesh they escaped punishment, but probably will never interfere in matters appertaining to *justice* again.

Also close to Skull Hill is the spot where St. Stephen is said to have been stoned, and, accordingly, the remains of a Byzantine church have been discovered, supposed to have been erected by the Empress Eudoxia, who seems, according to the guides, to have built all the churches except those erected by that other enterprising empress, Helena. There are many rock-hewn tombs in the grounds, one among them having been once claimed by the Latins to have been the tomb of Christ. The monk who showed it said it was at least as likely to

be the real one as that believed in by the English, but that the real one was neither this nor that, but the tomb in the church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Tons of human bones are lying in the sepulchres within the walls of this monastery. The Jewish tombs here contained receptacles for three bodies in each chamber; when these were filled, and other members of the family died, the bones of the first buried were collected and placed in a receptacle underneath the loculus. A depression for the head is cut in the rock. There are often two tiers of these burial chambers.

The Franciscan monks have a fine large property here enclosed in thick, high stone walls, which would be a good defence in case of attack, as would those of the Russian buildings. Whatever we may think, the Catholics are advancing, if silently, still resolutely, in the hopeless endeavour (at least for the present) to conquer Islamism. Let Father Hyacinthe say what he will, between Christianity and Mohammedanism there is a great gulf fixed, the breadth and depth of which those know best who best know the Moslems themselves.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ARMENIAN MONASTERY, TOMB OF DAVID, JEWS' WAILING-PLACE, AND MONASTERY OF THE CROSS

Once more old David's Tower looms above our heads, painting its dark massive form on the deep blue Syrian sky as it has done any time for more than three thousand years. It seems to resemble some venerable inhabitant of this ancient land still remaining, a hoary witness to its vanished glories. Old and new meet here, the antiquity which smiles with pity on the seething fancies of to-day, the present agape for a new sensation, despising the past of even yesterday.

As if to emphasise these remarks, opposite David's Tower, right on the brow of Zion, stands the church of the Christian Missionary Society. Following a road to the south we come to the property of the Armenians, which covers a large area, and contains the Patriarch's house, monastery, churches, and also accommodation for a number of

pilgrims and schools. All their churches are very sumptuous and in much the same style. The lower part of the interior walls are covered with beautiful blue and white tiles; above are hung paintings, many doors are inlaid with mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell, others are of carved wood, the altars are elaborately gilt; and the floors covered with the richest carpets, offerings from pilgrims and opulent members of the congregation. In one of these churches is shown the place where St. James the Great was beheaded—a chair which may never be occupied by man is placed ready for him near the altar; in another the chief object of interest seems to be three stones piled one above another from Sinai, Tabor, and Jordan. In one I remarked the missals and mitres of deceased Patriarchs and Archbishops; while another contains one of the prisons of Jesus Christ (there are said to be four in all), and is built on the site of the house of Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas. Among other curiosities is an olive-tree to which Christ is said to have been tied, called the "Tree of Scourging."

Opposite the entrance to these buildings may sometimes be observed a man sitting in the

shade, tatooing persons anxious to be so adorned. The patient selects his device from a number shown him, sits before the operator, and goes through the performance without moving a muscle of his face, though the pain caused by working out the large and elaborate designs must be considerable.

We now come to Zion gate, a massive erection with two towers. Until lately the two huge leaves of the door, lined with strips of iron like those of the gates of Cairo, were hung in their places, but one day they fell down, and Turkish energy was not equal to setting them up again. Accordingly they may be seen lying by the roadside. However, in falling the portion of the wall against which they had been folded was of course uncovered, and an old Roman inscription of some importance disclosed.

The beggars here are more importunate, the lepers more insistent, and the Arabs more impudent than in any other part of Jerusalem; they do their best to hinder the traveller from enjoying the view, and break roughly upon the meditations inspired by the very name of Zion. I several times saw the humble funeral of Armenian pilgrims pass through this gate. First comes a boy

carrying the coffin lid, then an Armenian priest, next the coffin itself, covered with pink calico, in which the corpse is exposed adorned with flowers, and last, a number of fellow-pilgrims chanting a well-known Gregorian chant. Poor pilgrims—or as they would say happy pilgrims—to have found their last home on the sacred soil near the shrines they have travelled so far to worship at! What better fate could pilgrims ask?

The mass of buildings directly in front of Zion gate contains the so-called Tomb of David (Neby Daud) and the Cœnaculum. Most unfortunately these buildings are entirely in the hands of the Moslems, who also revere David, and permit very little of them to be seen by Christians. It is the opinion of experts that if they could be thoroughly examined much which would throw light on the topography of Jerusalem might be discovered, perhaps even the mysterious site of the tombs of the ancient kings of Judah.

Before the custodian opens the entrance door he exacts a franc from each visitor in a most peremptory manner.

You are first shown the Cœnaculum, a low room with a vaulted ceiling, supported by massive red marble columns. The seat of Christ is shown

also. This is one of the greatest impositions in Jerusalem, the chambers being really the remains of a Christian church.

As to the sarcophagus of David, the visitor is only allowed to look through a small iron grating into a dingy room, where he sees something covered with green drapery, such as may be seen in any Turkish wely; below, the real tomb of David is said to exist.

I don't know that one's temper, by this time on the verge of giving way, is at all improved when the guide shows a small Armenian church close by, containing another prison of Christ, the stone which sealed the sepulchre, and the place where the cock crew when Peter denied Him. Really veritable, however, are the elaborate tombs of Armenian Patriarchs, among which stands the decidedly modern-looking monument of a Turkish Bey and his wife, who gave £500 for permission to be interred in the same place as these illustrious personages.

We have spent, I think, the most uninteresting morning we have had in Jerusalem, so we will try and make it up to ourselves by spending the afternoon in one of the most remarkable scenes in the world, the Wailing-Place of the Jews at the wall

of their ancient temple. It should be seen on Friday to be seen at its best.

It is approached by perhaps the narrowest and dirtiest lanes in Jerusalem, in which are the dwellings of the Moghrebins. Going past stone walls, blank but for a low doorway here and there, turning unexpected corners and avoiding blind alleys, we reach the majestic wall which represents nearly all that remains of Solomon's magnificent edifice. Some of the stones are so much as sixteen feet in length, others thirteen feet. They are grey and water-worn, as if the tears of the wailing people had washed them partly away. Leaning tenderly against these stones, as if they were human and could sympathise with their misery, and throwing themselves with outstretched arms against them, may be seen sometimes as many as two hundred Jews, reading, praying aloud, and weeping, men in one group and women in another. Clothed in garments rivalling in hue the most gorgeous plumage of Eastern birds, the colour intensified by the vivid rays of a brilliant sun, which the flickering shade of a tree near only serves to emphasise, some seated on the ground, and all rocking themselves to and fro, they make a scene as unique and remarkable as it is touching. Some

literally howl, and as the heads of most of them are in close proximity to the stones which they often kiss, a sort of buzz like the swarming of bees echoes continuously along the wall. Some rock themselves to and fro in an ecstacy of grief, others jump up and down with hands clenched, while tears stream down their cheeks; others bend over their prayer-books in quieter anguish, but all are seriously, solemnly in earnest. There is a grotesque side to the affair, however; they stick nails and screws into the crevices of the walls, praying that Jehovah may fix them in Jerusalem, as they are fixed. They also write petitions for their speedy restoration to the land of their fathers, and put them in the interstices of the stones.

On one occasion I came here and found some Jews wearing taliths richly embroidered with silver, praying, howling, and crying. An old man with his back to the wall read part of a service, and the responses sounded like a prolonged wail as the Jews rocked themselves to and fro and danced in agony. In weeping they only resemble other men of Eastern nations, who are accustomed to shed tears on slight provocation. It seems as if on Friday afternoons it was part of

their regular religious duty to come here and wail. Men and women dress themselves in their best, take their prayer-books, and repair as a matter of course to the almost only known remains of their ancient temple. They have done so ever since the Middle Ages.

It is a frequent question, Is all this weeping and wailing really sincere? If you observed one even of these poor old Jews sitting on the ground in a corner, bent nearly double over his well-worn prayer-book, tears streaming down his furrowed cheeks as he rocks himself to and fro in the very agony of beseeching, or a woman meanly clad perhaps, but neat and clean, her shawl folded over her head, as she throws herself with upraised arms against the pitiless stone she loves so well and shrieks aloud, you would not be able to doubt their sincerity. It is true, however, that some rich Jews hire people to wail for them here, but they may be easily recognised by the perfunctory nature of their performance.

Nor are beggars wanting in the lugubrious scene. They follow the crowd, and seated on the ground, or walking about with their tin buckets on their arms, petition strangers who come to visit the Wailing-Place most vociferously

for alms. Boys, too, run in and out among the crowd, shouting the eternal Eastern refrain, "Backsheesh, backsheesh!"

Jerusalem can present us with no scene more remarkable than that of these wailing Hebrews, piteously lamenting the fate which they have brought on themselves, and praying for their restoration to their own land.

In the cool of the evening it is a pleasant walk to the Armenian Monastery of the Cross, situated in a secluded valley two miles from the city. The church dates, it is said, from the fifth century ; at any rate the Crusaders found it there when they came. It was erected on the spot where the olive-tree grew from which the wood was cut to make the cross, in proof of which the root still remains, which the visitor can see. The floor of the church is of remarkably fine mosaic, stained, it is said, with the blood of many monks once murdered there by the Arabs. An altar commemorates the wicked deed. The monastery, with its two iron-lined doors, immense buttresses, and tiny windows, resembles a fortress. In the kitchen a huge pot full of pieces of meat and water was simmering on the fire. The cook told us it was *roas-bif*.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RESERVES

LATE in the year 1895 that crisis occurred in the Eastern question which gave the Sultan of Turkey occasion to call out his reserve forces. As a matter of course, we in Jerusalem knew little of European movements, letters being opened and examined, and newspapers containing references to Armenian subjects destroyed in the post. The first we heard of disturbances was that the missionary ladies at Nablous were advised not to come to a conference to be held in Jerusalem, the roads being unsafe, and the Pasha recommended ladies not to walk unattended in the streets. Next we heard the Druses in the Lebanon had risen, destroyed the village of Kefr Hawâr, and massacred a regiment or two of Turkish soldiers. The air became filled with rumours, and the worst effect of them to us was that the English were blamed as being the cause of all these misfortunes. Sometimes the Turks

asserted the Russians had joined them, at others that all the powers were united against England, and so on *ad infinitum.*

The next report was that the whole of Syria was in a most unsettled condition, and a law was enforced forbidding dragomans to conduct travellers up the country without a certificate that they knew the safest routes, these certificates to be first, second, and third class, under a penalty of 500 piastres. Persons travelling in the Turkish dominions must always be provided with teskerés, a kind of passport, and at this time a gentleman going from Damascus to Nablous was compelled to show his seven times by the way. A party of seventeen schoolboys going on a holiday excursion from Jerusalem to Nablous having, either in ignorance or inadvertently, neglected to provide themselves with these documents, were seized and imprisoned at that fanatical town. Troops in bands of nine patrolled the streets of Jerusalem.

September passed away in this manner, and early in October the reserves of all classes were called out. Every day troops of wild-looking men were brought into the city by Bashi-bazouks; hand in hand they strode along, shouting their

savage songs. One male must by law be left in each family; if there is only one, he is not taken, and the Sheiks are held responsible for the correct number of recruits being furnished by their villages. The Arabs dread being made soldiers, and will pull out their teeth, chop off a right-hand finger, thumb, or even a hand to incapacitate themselves. When taken they will sell all they possess to raise the £50 necessary to procure a substitute. And no wonder, for the old men, women, and children cannot perform the field labour required to raise the harvest for the ensuing year, and the reserves were this time required just as the season for ploughing and sowing had set in. Starvation, therefore, looked every one in the face. And further, the wages of the soldiers, though nominally a medjidieh each per month, are usually left unpaid. Some of the substitutes so soon as they received their £50 deserted, the Government immediately seizing the original conscript again.

The recruits and a few regular troops, numbering in all we were told 1200 men, encamped within a few paces of Herod's gate. Drilling went on vigorously every day. Rice was the only thing served out to them, but they appeared healthy

and muscular, and were the admiration of the veiled ladies who sat on the neighbouring hills, eating and smoking cigarettes, to look at them. They whiled away their spare time by dancing a sort of Pyrrhic dance; a party of them with their hands on each other's shoulders danced in a ring to the music of a flute played by a man standing in the centre. Sometimes they got excited and flourished their swords, dancing for hours at a time.

The manner of procuring horses and camels was worthy of the country. The Government sent officers round to ascertain the value of the animals possessed by the fellahin, who, thinking a new tax was about to be levied, gave the lowest valuation possible, and at that they were immediately purchased. Later on even this show of justice ceased, and camels, mules, and horses were seized on the road. On one occasion I saw a man weeping over some boxes of oranges by the wayside; his camels had been taken, and he had no means of conveying his goods to the market. Again, some dressed stones were lying in the very middle of a road, impeding the traffic most hopelessly; they had been thrown off the backs of the camels by the Government officers,

and the animals taken. On another occasion that I noticed they took not only the camel, but the cooking utensils with which he was laden; the poor owners were walking sadly by the side of their lost quadruped. Some of the natives asked Europeans to take charge of their animals for the time; others hid them in caves, conveying food and water to them by night. The roads gradually got more and more deserted, and instead of giving the old familiar salutation, "Marhaba! marhabtên!" the people passed by in silent gloom.

Recruits poured in every day, two hundred rough-looking fellows came from one village only; they were brought in singing with the energy of desperation, their weeping relatives following, for it is but too true, and they know it well, that those who go to the war have very little chance of ever being heard of more. It was touching to see an old man carrying his grandson after the troops to look at his father—perhaps for the last time.

One day we were suddenly aroused by the music of a band and the trampling of many feet; the soldiers were leaving Jerusalem. We rushed off with the motley crowd, and taking up a good

position on the top of a wall, saw the departure well.

Every coign of vantage was crowded with spectators, including the road to the top of Mount Scopus, Skull Hill, and all the available house tops. The way was thickly lined on both sides with Arab women and their children, Jews, veiled Turkish women who emitted the peculiar shrill cry which with them expresses either pleasure or pain, and is used at marriages as well as funerals, as a friend or husband passed by in the ranks, or the men who had been fortunate enough to escape being called out. Vendors of lemonade, water, sweetmeats, nuts, and dried melon-seeds made the air resound with their discordant cries. On a rising ground a gorgeous tent was erected, in front of which stood the civil and military Pashas of Jerusalem and other officers, their horses being picketed close by.

Then the band arrived, screaming, screeching, and drumming most unmelodiously, as is the wont of Turkish bands, followed by the regular troops of Jerusalem, four abreast; after them the reserves struggled along. They were picturesque-looking fellows in keffiyehs and as much scratch uniform divided among them as the authorities

had been able to get together, eked out with abbâs and other Bedouin garments, but small in stature, and many of them villainous-looking enough. It was touching to see some of their wives following them, carrying, in addition to their children, the folded abbâs of their husbands and a little food and water as far as they could. Headed by a pale officer in spectacles and a fat one wearing many decorations and preceded by buglers, the recruits took up their places in advance, saluting the authorities in the tent as they passed. The ammunition followed on mules, the heavy baggage having been sent on at daybreak.

The crowd struggled and surged as is the wont of all crowds whether Western or Oriental, and women who thought themselves crowded by us freely called us pigs and dogs, and expressions of dislike to all Christians were rife. But the band struck up the Sultan's march, in the intervals of which, at a tap of the drum, the recruits set up a very feeble made-to-order kind of cheer, at the same time touching their breasts and foreheads. How could they cheer heartily for a Sultan they knew nothing about, or fight bravely for homes they never expected to see again? Then those

about to leave were permitted to embrace their friends for the last time, and the order being given to march, the recruits wound slowly up the northern heights, while the regulars marched back with colours flying to the music of their band. Of course no one knew the destination of these poor fellows; some reports said Jaffa, others Beyrout, others Haifa, and some the Haurân. Wherever it was, news may never again reach their friends of those recruits who marched up the stony hills that pleasant autumn morning; at any rate, the truth about their fate will be hard to learn, and it is certain not more than a quarter have a chance of returning. We were told the departing troops consisted of two regiments of eight hundred men each.

The partings between some of the men seemed more sorrowful than between men and women, for the bond of friendship among Arabs is very strong, stronger than that of matrimony. When two youths wish to form a binding friendship, they summon their relatives and friends together to a feast, during which they each wound themselves slightly in the arm with a spear and drink a little of the blood that flows. Neither father, mother, wife, nor child, can afterwards destroy

the friendship thus cemented; and they both wear a charm in sign of the bond, which is called "the covenant of blood."

Other instances of this kind of friendship may be given in this connection. When General Grant went up the Nile, an Arab Sheik, who wished to do him special honour, killed an ox with the single blow of an axe, put the carcass on one side of his door and the head on the other, sprinkling the lintel with the blood before the General entered, thus making a bond of eternal friendship with him. In Cairo when a bride of the richer classes enters her husband's home for the first time, two oxen standing ready at each side of the door are slain the moment she steps out of the carriage, and she enters the house between two running streams of blood. So the covenant between them is cemented. The sight is very horrible to European eyes, but the natives look on unmoved.

Indeed the lives of both men and beasts are but little valued among Arabs, and the sight of blood is familiar. A man who is known to have committed five murders walks the streets of Jerusalem with impunity, and has done so for fifteen years. There are many other instances

of a like nature. Such is the almighty power of backsheesh.

It is possible these details may be familiar to many readers, and therefore unnecessary from my pen; but I am encouraged to note them by an incident which occurred within my own knowledge, and which shows how little is known about the Holy Land in some quarters. A lady resident in Jerusalem visiting England was introduced as "Mrs. So-and-So of Jerusalem!" "Indeed," was the reply, "is there still such a place?"

This chapter, which chiefly concerns Arabs and their ways, may be fitly concluded by one of their characteristic tales learnt from their own lips:—

"He only Loosened the Tent-peg."

An Arab Tale.

The Arabs have a saying, "He only loosened the tent-peg," meaning that the person spoken of has surreptitiously caused mischief, or been the underhand promoter of some signal misfortune. Its origin is as follows:—

There was once upon a time an old Jinn who in his youth had led a very wicked life. As he grew old he began to repent, and at last resolved

upon a pilgrimage to Mecca as the best means of expiating his enormous offences, and acquiring the goodwill of the Prophet. A Jinn who was a friend of his had a son whom nothing could cure of his mischievous propensities, so imagining that what was good in one case might prove efficacious in another, he asked his old friend to allow the boy to accompany him on his pious journey. After much consideration and long delay the old Jinn consented, but on these conditions, that the boy should solemnly vow, first, never to be absent from his side more than a quarter of an hour at a time, and secondly, that he would not do harm to either man or beast. With this understanding they set out on their journey.

All went well for a time, till one night they came upon a Bedouin encampment. Everything seemed in perfect order, the people were asleep, the dogs quiet, the horses and camels feeding, and all as it should be. The boy asked the old man if he might just go through the encampment to see it; with many misgivings, and reminding him again and again of his promise, the Jinn gave an unwilling consent.

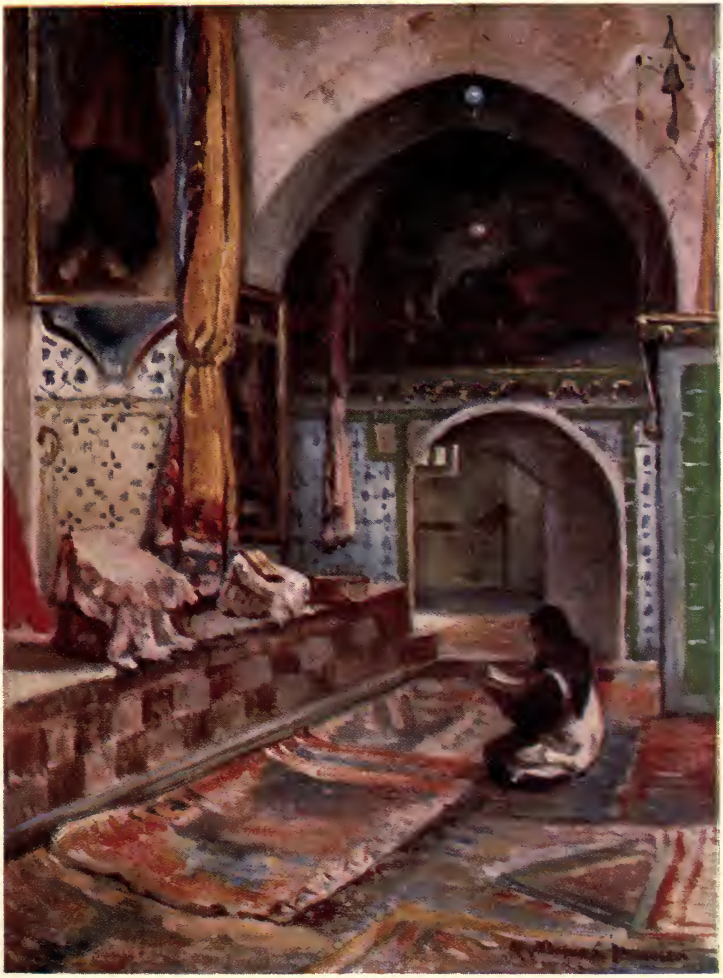
Everything remained very quiet, and at the end of a quarter of an hour the boy returned. But a

few minutes after a perfect uproar arose in the camp. The dogs barked, the women screamed, the horses and camels rushed wildly about, and all was confusion and dismay, to which the darkness of night lent additional terror.

Then the old Jinn felt sure that in some way or other the boy was concerned in doing the mischief, so he thus addressed him—

"I am certain," said he, "that you have been the cause of this disturbance. Tell me therefore precisely what you did when you went into the Bedouin camp."

"Nothing wrong," replied the boy. "I kept my promise, stayed but a quarter of an hour, and did no mischief to either man or beast. Only on going to look at the tent of the Sheik, who was sleeping, I saw a valuable mare tethered to one of his tent-pegs, and went to ascertain whether she was safely tied or not. In doing so, I only just loosened the tent-peg."



CHAPTER XV

BETHLEHEM

It is fortunate for the traveller who has but little leisure to spare for his visit to Palestine that several of the most interesting localities lie within short distances of his headquarters at Jerusalem, viz. Bethlehem, Jericho, and Bethany. Bethlehem, the only place at all approaching the Holy City in the sacredness of its associations, is within three-quarters of an hour's ride, or half-an-hour by carriage, over a level, well-made road.

Soon after leaving the Jaffa gate stretches of wild mountains are seen, varied by occasional olive plantations and vineyards, each vineyard crowned with one or more watch towers, where, when the grapes are ripe, a sentinel watches day and night to keep off thieves and foxes. The Armenian monastery of Mâr Elias (St. Elijah) occupies a commanding position by the side of the road. Opposite is a hollow in a rock, the impress of the prophet Elijah's body you are told, who was found lying there by the king's messen-

Their skill in handling this instrument is very remarkable.

The busy market-place overlooks the valley of Carobs or Locust-trees, the bean or pod of which St. John the Baptist is said to have partly subsisted on. The pod has a sweet taste, but is somewhat stringy. Arabs are fond of eating them.

At the upper end of the market-place stands the grand old Church of the Nativity, built by the Emperor Constantine, and probably the oldest in the world.

The façade of the church and mass of monasteries by which it is surrounded have the appearance of a fortress. The door is very low, so that we must stoop a good deal to enter; it is partly built up to make it easy of defence. It leads to a dark porch, from which another low door opens, passing through which we find ourselves in a church of the most noble simplicity and exquisite proportions. It has double aisles, divided by dark marble columns supporting walls, on which may still be seen the remains of the mosaic with which they were once richly adorned. Those who have seen the early Christian churches of Ravenna will be struck with the resemblance this church bears

to them. The roof is made of pine wood. Unfortunately the vista is spoiled by a wall separating the nave from the apse.

The apse and transepts are used as chapels; the gaudy central chapel belongs to the Greeks, and a triangular space in one of the transepts, containing intolerably tawdry altars, to the Armenians—their carpet is carefully folded anglewise to the exact size of their property—and between each of these chapels, on their little wooden platforms, stand Turkish soldiers, to prevent dissension, and keep possession of the church. They are on duty here day and night, lest the Christians should lock the doors and take the church into their own keeping, as they have done before now.

We descended to the crypt, and there, under an altar, brilliant with the light of gorgeous silver lamps, is the spot where Christ is said to have been born; a star of silver gilt bearing the inscription "Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est" indicates the spot where happened the greatest event in the history of the world. As a matter of course the authenticity of the site is disputed, but so much is certain, that this dark cavern has been revered as the birthplace of Jesus Christ since the

year 330 of His era. The venerable antiquity of the belief, if nothing else, gives it a claim to our consideration and respect. Opposite and lower down is another chapel, where a marble slab covers a portion of the rock, which is said to be the manger from which the cradle now in Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome was taken. The whole cavern, which is indisputably of natural rock, is covered with rich hangings, and from the roof are suspended countless brilliant lamps.

The scene there was very striking when mass was performed and the cave filled with monks, each carrying a taper, Russian pilgrims, in their rude rough garments, with eyes bright with unmistakable religious fervour, and wild-looking Arabs, all chanting a beautiful litany. He is unhappy who could find it in his heart to carp at a scene like this.

We then ascended to the modern-looking church of the Latins, where Dominican monks were busily employed in teaching a number of little Arab boys to confess. Though they have not got the manger and birthplace, the Latins have possession of the large subterranean grotto where St. Jerome is buried, the cell in which he translated the Bible, the tombs of St. Paula and

her mother, the place where the angel appeared to St. Joseph telling him to fly into Egypt, and the grave of the Innocents slain by order of Herod.

Even during mass at the manger a soldier was on guard, looking on, it seemed to me, sardonically. It appears a necessary precaution, for two years ago, during a crowded ceremony here, some English travellers arrived, accompanied by a dragoman who tried to force a way in for his party, but was repulsed by the Turkish sentinel. The dragoman fired his pistol, and a tumult ensued, in which one man was killed and another severely wounded.

I may be permitted another incident to illustrate the spirit of the rival Churches in Palestine.

A rich Roman Catholic built a church and monastery near Salt, which is a Protestant village. When all was complete the Latin Patriarch came to inspect, and said the establishment must be given into the control of the Church. This the builder refused to do, and said he would rather give his buildings to the Protestants. The Patriarch offered £300 to the Pasha of the district to get rid of this man in order to seize the property, and soldiers were accordingly thickly

posted in every direction where he might be supposed to appear. Fortunately one of Cook's managers took the matter in hand, disguised the Catholic as an old man with spectacles and a long white beard, walked beside him under the very soldiers' noses, and got him safely on board ship. He gave the whole of his property in Salt to the Protestants, needless to add.

Surely that ought to be an ideal Christmas Day spent in the church built to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ, perhaps over his very birthplace, and in the field where the "shepherds watched their flocks by night." But another disenchantment awaited us, another dream had a cruel awakening. Like the ceremony of the Greek fire in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the crowding and crushing render it impossible to attend this celebration without absolute danger. People take up their places in the church for the whole night before Christmas Day, and the Shepherds' Field is the scene of an ordinary country fête. Let the devout pilgrim therefore choose another day on which to visit the sacred scenes and muse on the holy memories they awaken.

We rode on Christmas Day to the Shepherds' Field and the Field of Boaz (for it must not be

forgotten that the charming idyll of Ruth has its *locale* at Bethlehem), through the savage, dirty, old and picturesque village of Bêt Sahûr. In the Shepherds' Field a great crowd was assembled. The women of Bethlehem were radiant in their embroidered jackets of the brightest imaginable hues and richly worked veils; sellers of wine, water, and sweetmeats were there, boys playing boisterously, and men caracolling on horses. The field is a pretty olive grove amid the scattered remains of an ancient church; the crypt, which still exists, has been turned into a chapel by the Greeks, and a service was being held. The descent is by a flight of exceedingly dangerous steps, and the only light, except that from the candles on the altar, comes through a small hole in the roof.

Not far from Bethlehem is the Christian village of Bêt Jâla nestling in its olive groves. On a hill above it we had one of the most extensive views near Jerusalem. From the vineyards among which we stood, far over barren hills, on the one hand, lies the blue Mediterranean; opposite are the mountains of Moab, forming a background of ever-changing glory to Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Perpetual mountains of stone, solemn and grey, showing

not the slightest vestige of vegetation, with here and there a little village or ruin, such are the characteristics of Palestine. At sunset clouds like swords of flame flashed over the western horizon, rivalling the scarlet anemones[1] of the sward beneath, and Moab was deluged with splendour.

[1] The "lilies of the field" are supposed to be the anemones which grow in such rich profusion in the Holy Land, while the "rose of Sharon" is said to be the cistus, which is also very abundant.

CHAPTER XVI

BETHANY, JERICHO, THE JORDAN, AND DEAD SEA

It is astonishing how quickly we grow familiar with names and places which seem as visionary as a dream before we have beheld them. We are now accustomed to say, "We are going to Bethlehem, Jericho, or any other wonderful scene in the Holy Land" with as much indifference as we say in England, "We are going to Kensington or York." We have also learnt to live without letters, newspapers, and roast beef.

Jericho is eighteen miles from Jerusalem by road, and less than half that distance as the crow flies. We joined a party going there, and started at eight o'clock one morning in splendid weather. The slight accident of an Arab's eye being cut by a stone just as we started did not much affect the spirits of the party, and he bore his misfortune like a Stoic.

The first halt was made at Bethany to visit the so-called Tomb of Lazarus. This is a rock-

cut tomb, having two chambers one above the other, twenty-four steps lead to the upper one. It is one of the most apocryphal sites in Palestine, equalling Neby Daud in this respect. We were told that the people who exhibit this tomb pay five napoleons a year to the Government for the privilege. What is shown as the house of Martha and Mary are the ruins of a Crusader's church, and the ruin which crowns the village is the remains of a Crusader's castle.

Bethany is a stone-built village on the slope of a spur of the range of mountains partly formed by the Mount of Olives. It is inhabited solely by Moslems, who are exceedingly wild in appearance and behaviour. I first noticed here the custom of tattooing, chiefly the female children, who are marked on the chin and lips and sometimes other parts of the face. At times the whole of the lower lip is blue from this disfiguring practice.

Arabs are an exceedingly dirty people, seldom even taking off their clothes. When they wish to sleep at night they simply undo their girdles and shake their garments over a fire if they have one; if they are not well enough off to have this luxury, in the air; they then wrap themselves

in their abbâs and lie down. In the morning they repeat the shaking process, tighten their belts, and their toilets are complete for the day.

The road after leaving the fertile fields of Bethany winds amid hills, terrible and barren. Bedouin with their flocks wander among them, but what the goats and sheep find to feed on is a mystery. Fellahin were ploughing, or rather scratching, the earth on which the seed had previously been scattered, a donkey and a cow yoked together being the animals frequently employed to draw the rude construction which serves as a plough.

The next halt was made at the Khan of the Good Samaritan (Khan Hudrûr). It is commonly said that the incident from which it takes its name occurred on this spot, without reflecting that simply a parable and not a fact is related by Christ, and recorded in the tenth chapter of St. Luke. However, it is as easy to fall among thieves there now as it was in the days of the Apostles.

Turning aside from the direct road we descended the awful precipices of the Wady Kelt. Nature has few such tremendous scenes to show in the Old World as this weird cleft

in the earth, the nearly perpendicular sides of which seem to shut out heaven. To look up or down makes the head giddy. At the bottom foams the angry little brook Cherith, where, it is said, Elijah was fed by ravens. The atmosphere in the gorge is hot and close, and orange and lemon trees, bananas and palms, flourish in the tropical climate at the bottom.

On one side of the ravine is the monastery of St. John of Choseboth, where a few monks still reside, anaemic creatures dead to all human interests. Water is drawn up by means of a rope, for the building is high above the brook, and stuck like a limpet to the rock. In the Cherith some very good fish are to be caught, but the monks carefully conceal the best places for catching them.

The rocks on both sides above and below the narrow pathway which winds along the sides of the precipices are honeycombed with hermits' caves, some of whom have built little walls on a ledge in front to keep off the worst of the weather; and one luxurious man has a ladder of ropes whereby to descend to his abode, the ladder leading to a kind of shelf in front of the cave. These misguided people

have for ages affected this appalling and stupendous ravine as a place of residence. Of course in a climate where oranges and bananas ripen, it is not so difficult to lead this kind of life as in colder lands, for life requires but little here except what Nature herself bestows. Several hermits still haunt the grottos ; at present fashion runs in favour of the caves below the path and near the water ; how they are entered is a puzzle.

Crossing the brook which brawls loudly over the stones, we crept along the narrow, dangerous path on the side of the wady till we came to the last turn in the gorge, and suddenly beheld the vast plain of Jericho stretched out before us, the site of Gilgal at our feet, on the right the blue Dead Sea cradled in the mountains of Moab, above which Mount Nebo raised his head, and on the left the noble mass of Hermon crowned with snow, nearly a hundred miles away.

Turning to the left we ascended Mount Quarantania, the Mount of Temptation (Gebel Karantel) on foot.

The mountain is wild and craggy, from twelve to fifteen hundred feet in height, and

pierced with hermits' caves. The Greeks have hung a monastery in front of some very deep caves, through which we had to pass to arrive at the top. It contains at present ten monks, some of whom offered us sweetmeats, liqueurs, and water. Life here is very primitive; the dining-room is a cave, the mean little chapel the same; the dinner-bell is a beam of wood struck by a mallet, such as Christians used to use as a substitute when bells were prohibited by the Moslems. The monks show a stone marked with a cross, where they say Christ passed forty days and forty nights. On this mountain Josephus spent three years in learning the "wisdom of the Essenes."

Passing through the quaint galleries which form the monastery, we followed the very winding pathway up a steep ascent, and in twenty minutes reached the poor remains of a Crusader's church which mark the summit. The view on the east includes the whole plain of Jericho, with the Jordan flowing through it, shut in by the Moabite mountains; on the south, part of the Dead Sea and mouth of the Jordan; on the north, ranges of mountains, and separate mountain after mountain, stretch

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away into the far west, looking like the petrified billows of some gigantic ocean.

A few heaps of hewn stones and a mound of rubbish are all that remain of ancient Jericho; near the heaps is a fine spring of water called Ain-es-Sultân, over which were flitting gaily-plumaged birds, only found in the Ghor or plain of the Jordan, called sunbirds.

Here we were encountered by some Arabs with a few Syrian greyhounds for sale. This graceful dog is a greyhound in form, but has longer hair, ears, and tail; so particular are the Arabs as to their figures, that they put a tight strap round their waists to keep them small. I was reminded forcibly of what are called wasp-waists in more civilised lands.

At the foot of Mount Quarantania the Dead Sea apple, which has formed a stock simile for poets for ages, may be gathered. It is the fruit of the *Solanum sanctum*, bright yellow in colour, the size of a small apple; the shrub on which it grows is prickly, like most of the plants in Palestine. When fresh the inside consists of a white glutinous substance smelling like tallow, which dries black; this accounts

perhaps for the phrase, "turning to ashes on the lips." The celebrated rose of Jericho is a low plant, growing on the sandy soil of the shores of the Dead Sea, which the Arabs gather and dry. When put into water the leaves open, but it in no way resembles a rose. So with other illusions perish these also.

At last the full moon rose over Moab, flooding all the Jordan valley with misty silver light. Loath to lose the sight, we wandered about among the thorny nubk bushes till it was time to retire to our tents and sleep. Jackals howled in the distance, pariah dogs barked close by, and donkeys brayed all round, thus forming an animal concert which lasted through the night. When, in the morning, these sounds died away, the songs of the Arabs began, two parties of men singing alternately. It was not unpleasing, coming nearer and nearer, and afterwards passing away as the caravan moved onward into the desert. They beguile their long journeys for hours with these weird melodies.

The present Jericho is a squalid village of three hundred inhabitants, including those of a Greek monastery and a hotel. It boasts two

or three shops, which are kept by Jews. The inhabitants live in huts made of adobe and old stones, and thatched with canes, over which earth is spread to keep out the heat. In the evening they sit round little fires, smoking, drinking coffee, and telling tales. Very dark, in fact almost black, the women of Jericho are tall and thin, and wear long, deep blue robes, which add in appearance to their stature; some are remarkable for their beautiful tawny hair, which, when unveiled, looks like an aureole of gold in the sunlight. The little children run about naked.

Around the Greek Hospice numerous fragments of ruins, rudely carved capitals, and portions of columns, one of Egyptian granite, peer out of the ground here and there. Oranges are particularly fine in Jericho, and banana palms flourish; in December peas, beans, vegetable marrows, and cucumbers are found, which facts will give an idea of the heat of the plain, shut in as it is between two ranges of mountains; the soil is sand in summer and a marsh during the short winter. It is probably one of the hottest of places in its own latitude. The Sultan, to whom the plain of Jericho belongs, has sold

a part of it to a Jewish colony; with irrigation it would be of unexampled fertility, but the climate in the summer months generally proves fatal to Europeans.

Numbers of tropical birds frequent the Ghor; one called a bulbul, a little larger than our nightingale, makes every nubk bush vocal with its song.

A water conduit and huge grinding stones of some sugar-mills built by the Crusaders still remain. Robinson places the site of the Jericho conquered by the invading Jews at the mounds near Ain-es-Sultân, and the Jericho of Herod at the mouth of the Wady Kelt, where may still be seen many squared stones and the archway of an aqueduct. We picked up some well-preserved specimens of mosaic on this site. Modern Jericho is the third corner of a triangle formed by itself and the two other Jerichos.

To the ford of the Jordan is a ride of two hours. The road lies over a sandy plain, varied with low bushes of a blueish-grey colour. A golden eagle calmly watched our progress from a solitary rock; no efforts of ours availed to make him leave his elevated perch. The Jordan is a narrow, muddy, yellow river, running swiftly

between banks, here covered with canes, tamarisks, and poplars. The current is very strong; shortly before our visit an unwary bather, a young man of twenty-five, was carried away by the stream, and his body never recovered. At this ford it is said the Israelites crossed on their way to the Promised Land, and tradition points out the same place as the scene of the baptism of John. We ascertained from the Arabs that the river is really fordable just here at times, but the water comes as high as the chin, and they carry their effects on their heads as they cross.

At present this ford is the great resort of Russian pilgrims, who come to be baptized, and who stand for hours almost naked in the water, awaiting the Patriarch's benediction. These poor creatures suffer untold hardships to go through this rite. They leave Russia, taking deck passages only, not seldom driven past Jaffa to Port Said by storms, remaining sometimes six days or more in the ship, on deck night and day, eating only the coarse fare they carry with them, yet always patient, singing their sweet hymns as only Russians can sing. They perform the journey from Jerusalem to Jericho on

foot in the burning sun, sometimes losing their lives by the way. Seven hundred of them were baptized the day we visited the ford, it being Easter-tide. The priest stands on a little platform over the river and addresses the pilgrims; the instant he blesses the water they plunge under it. On the road they may be seen lying in the shade of the rocks to rest, and eating their slight repast. At the Khan Hadrûr they asked for a little water, crossed themselves, broke a little black bread into a bowl, poured the water over it, and ate the mess with apparent content. They cut canes on the banks of the Jordan, and take home the water in tin bottles slung over their shoulders. The loads even the women carry on their backs are very heavy, as they trudge the long weary miles under the rays of the burning Syrian sun.

Some distance above the ford is a bridge, to cross which a small toll is demanded. Usually the Bedouin put double loads on their animals which are to cross it, and, when the river is low enough, ford it themselves to save the tax. Lately the Turkish official in charge saw some Bedouin about to do this and remonstrated with them; his remonstrance being without effect he

fired a revolver, shot one man in the arm and killed another, then mounting a horse galloped away to avoid the vengeance of the tribe. He was sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment, but is expected back at his post in three months, such sentences being merely nominal when a man is well off.

Under the tamarisk trees on the banks of the Jordan we rested and lunched, the Arabs around us singing and watching for the remains of the repast, while cuckoos and nightingales made a divine chorus above.

There is only one boat on the river Jordan, and this boat it was our ambition to secure for a row to the Dead Sea. We discovered it and the boatman in it, but he was more intent on selling some fish he had caught than on rowing travellers on the river. Asked what he would charge for the row he said "three medjidiehs." As a matter of course we tried to beat him down, when suddenly he raised his demand to two napoleons. Being really anxious to make the trip, we resolved to go through the usual formula of bargaining, but in the course of half-an-hour could only get him down to a napoleon and a half, with a medjidieh backsheesh. This,

too, we refused to give, and entered into negotiations for a short row only up the river and the option of landing on the opposite shore instead for a medjidieh, which proved successful.

We jumped into the boat. After leaving the shrubs and trees which grow so profusely near the ford, the river flows between hills almost perpendicular, where at intervals streams of sulphurous water trickle. At a cleft in one of these hills we landed, and going inland obtained a fine view over the land of Moab, a wild desolate tract, from which mountains rise abruptly two miles distant from the river. A little further up tamarisks and canes grow thickly, and herds of camels, young and old, each with its attendant raven on its back, browse in the dense scrub.

Here a Greek priest—the only boat belongs to the Greek monastery—suddenly appeared among the bushes and shouted to our boatman to take us to the Dead Sea for the napoleon we offered, but he persisted in his demand for more till we landed, and there a Turkish effendi, hearing the cause of dispute, told him he ought to be ashamed of himself for refusing to accept such a liberal offer. At length he consented

and we started, the handsome priest who had before spoken jumping into the boat and rowing with might and main.

From the ford to the Dead Sea the Jordan runs through low banks covered with tamarisks, canes, and poplars, growing in the greatest luxuriance. Kingfishers in gorgeous plumage, the gay sunbird which is peculiar to this valley, flocks of silver-white cranes, ducks, pigeons, and crows are seen in great numbers. Soft atmosphere, warm sunshine, and luxuriant scenery combined to render this an ideal journey, as the boat, propelled by two strong rowers, floated over the yellow tide of Jordan. All vegetation ceases some time before the Dead Sea is reached, the banks become low and marshy, and innumerable ducks are seen waiting for the fish which die on reaching the salt water and are thrown up on the shore. All then becomes barren and hushed.

The water is very sweet till the junction of river and sea; for the Jordan flows from the north end of the Lake of Gennesaret, which is sweet water, and runs directly into the Dead Sea.

In two hours the boat reached the mouth of the river, where we stuck for some time on a sandbank. We turned, when we at last got

off, towards the western shore of the Dead Sea.

The water was that day of a beautiful bright blue; the reflections of the surrounding mountains, rising four thousand feet above it, were dimly outlined on its depths. "In summer, when the heat is intense, a thin whitish quivering vapour hangs over the surface of the water, and gives a strange, dreamy indistinctness to the mountains."[1] The sea stretches towards the south as far as the eye can reach, but on the eastern and western banks loom ranges of lofty hills. Birds were flying over it, and a few ducks ventured on its oily tide; on the shore lay hundreds of dead fish killed by the nauseous brine. The strand is covered with the trunks and branches of dead trees, like the white and weird skeletons of mammoths bleached by the wind and waves. No sound of boat, no form of beast invades the solemn stillness of the scene; no living things save birds are there, no city is reflected in its solitary waters; the very waves seem to share the universal hush, and break silently on the beach. But it is not always placid; very

[1] "Holy Places in Syria," W. Porter.

violent storms sometimes arise on this vast inland sea, and then the force of the waves is terrific.

The Dead Sea is fifty miles long and two thousand six hundred and three feet below the level of the Mediterranean.

We lost no time in plunging into its strong and tepid waters, for I know nothing more delicious than a bath in its refreshing waves. You cannot possibly sink; if you lie on the water you can balance yourself without the least exertion, if you cease to balance yourself you simply turn over. The water has the bitterest taste imaginable, one-fourth being salt in solution. Two years ago the Arabs frightened some ladies who were bathing here, but we were more fortunate.

The ride hence to Jericho is through remarkable scenery, white hills shaped like castles, huts, and towers rising straight out of the treeless and waterless plain. Only a few thorny plants and bushes, in which rabbits and partridges hide, are met with. A lady and gentleman riding across this plain about twelve months ago were fired at by some Bedouin and robbed, their guide running away, only to return when

all was over. The authorities succeeded in capturing the robbers and in imposing a fine on them, but speaking afterwards on the subject the Bedouin remarked that their only regret was that when firing they had missed the man and shot the donkey, and as for the saddles they had taken, they were only fit to make soles for shoes.

We slept that night at the Greek Hospice, where are fairly comfortable quarters, but the traveller must find his own provisions.

On our way back to Jerusalem we stopped at the khan of the Good Samaritan again. It presented a scene full of life. American and English tourists in all their luxury were lunching on ham, chicken, and bottled beer, side by side with poor Russian pilgrims dining meagrely on bread and water. Sundry dragomans tried to pick a quarrel with our party for not having hired them to conduct us to Jericho, saying that as strangers we ought to be made to pay. They seized the bridle of one of the horses, and incited the keeper of the khan to demand exorbitant backsheesh for his accommodation, which consisted of a seat and a drink of water each. At last one of the party pretended to

draw a revolver and, frightened, they let us proceed in peace. An Arab was kicked in the face by a troublesome horse and had to be sent back to the Jordan. So, late at night we rode into Jerusalem again.

CHAPTER XVII

NEBY SAMWIL, EMMAUS, MAR SABA, AIN-KARÎM, AND AIN FÂRA

"There shall be a handful of corn upon the top of the mountain."
—PSALM lxxii. 16.

THERE are numerous interesting excursions round Jerusalem which hasty travellers never make; in this chapter I will endeavour to describe some, each of which can easily be taken in a day or less with the aid of a sure-footed pony or strong donkey. There are no riding animals so reliable as those of Syria; up precipices, down deep wadys, across glassy rocks, over rough stones, they will carry you safely, though the bare sight of the path to be travelled would fill you with apprehension even were you on foot.

Neby Samwil, the supposed burial-place of the Prophet Samuel, stands on a hill three hours' distance from Jerusalem, and from its height is always a conspicuous feature in the landscape. The road to it is very rough, the

eternal stones of Judæa and round-topped mountains with their little stone villages being seen in full perfection; there are stones and thorns, thorns and stones wherever you travel. The Crusaders called the mountain "Mons Gaudii," because from its summit they had their first glimpse of the Holy City they had travelled so far to conquer, and they built a church over what they believed to be the tomb of Samuel. Above the ruins of this church the Moslems have erected a mosque, for they also wish to have a share in doing honour to Samuel; but Christians are only permitted to look at the grave through an iron grating. It is apparently a sarcophagus covered with green cloth.

The chief attraction to this spot is the view from the minaret, one of the most extensive in Palestine. Villages renowned in Bible history lie thick around you; on the one side the blue Mediterranean sparkles in the sun, on the other lies Jerusalem, sheltered by the Mount of Olives, its fine old yellow walls relieved by the deep blue of the Moabite mountains.

Farther on is one of the traditional sites of Emmaus, where, in a Franciscan monastery, the

house of Cleophas is shown. Turning out of the burning rays of the Syrian sun how grateful the shade of the cool cloisters seemed, and how pleasant to hear once more the melody of the dear Italian tongue! Near Mount Lebanon a native saluted us with "buona sera"; how strange it sounded after the rough Arabic to which the wayfarer gets so thoroughly accustomed!

The village is called El Kubebeh,[1] and it is thought quite possible may really be the site of the Emmaus of the New Testament. The church is said to stand on the spot where Jesus broke bread with the disciples, its distance from Jerusalem answering the requirements of the narrative.

A devout lady named Nicolai purchased the site of the monastery and presented it to the Franciscan Order. She appears to have lived here, for her room is shown and a glass case full of her funny old-fashioned clothes. She died in Jerusalem and was buried there, but the inscription on her tombstone informs us her body

[1] El Kubebeh is sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, and was identified by the Crusaders as the Emmaus of the New Testament. The villages of Hammoza, Kolonieh, and Amwâs are also rival claimants, but the preponderance of evidence is in favour of El Kubebeh.

was taken up four years afterwards, and carried *in the arms of the abbot* to its present resting-place in the gaudy subterranean chapel belonging to the Order.

Riding back we passed many cave-dwellings, out of which the natives ran to look at us and demand backsheesh. In the wadys fig and olive trees flourished amid the little crops of the fellahin, looking like a strip of green ribbon lying on the dusty earth. Standing on a hill, we saw on the plain below ten gazelles peacefully eating their evening meal, the old ones ever on the alert, the fawns undisturbed by a danger they did not understand. How graceful they looked as they bounded disdainfully away, sometimes stopping and looking back as if mocking our impotence to follow them!

The monastery of Mar Saba (Saint Saba) is a penal settlement for Greek priests, visited chiefly on account of its weird position in a gorge more than five hundred feet deep. We started at seven o'clock in the morning, and passing the Jaffa gate turned into the valley of the Kedron, leaving Job's Well to the left. The road is a difficult one to travel, stones and slippery rocks crossing the slopes of mountains

and innumerable wadys are its characteristics. In three hours we reached our destination.

The monastery is built up one side of the gorge in small terraces, and supported by immense stone buttresses. Not a green tree or herb is to be seen save one small palm within the walls. Desolation reigns undisturbed in this almost appalling region. Two towers of large dimensions, now falling to decay, guard the approach to the door—one is devoted to the accommodation of ladies who have obtained the necessary permission from the Patriarch at Jerusalem; but they are, under no pretext whatever, admitted into the monastery itself. It is whispered that a lady in male costume once ventured to explore the mysteries of the monastery; I am inclined to believe it, and congratulate that lady on her courage and curiosity.

The more favoured male traveller, however, knocks loudly at the inhospitable door, and is answered from a hole in the wall above him, whence also a little basket is let down to receive his credentials. We, however, modestly ate our lunch in the shadow of one of the towers, whence, after much trouble, we dispossessed a number of arrogant goats ruminating in the shade, while

their shepherds picturesquely grouped themselves round us, and entered into such conversation as is possible between persons knowing only two or three words of each other's languages. After, we walked round to the head of the gorge, which seems as if rent in the earth by some mighty convulsion of nature, and though now quite dry, as if torrents of water must at one time have dashed down it, carrying with it huge fragments of rock to throw them aside in every direction in its mad career. Not a tree or bush is to be seen on the uniform yellow earth, a few small flowers only relieve the dead monotony of the rocks and stones. Nature appears here in her maddest and most cruel mood, frowning and repellant, and refusing her sustenance to all creatures. Over this savage scene the sun pitilessly pours its scorching beams ; there is no shade, no water, not a single blade of grass to relieve the agony caused by the blinding waste.

Of course this retreat was at a premium among hermits, and they made it a favourite haunt. Many entrances to caves may be seen, though how they were entered must ever remain a mystery to persons with only ordinary nerves.

After two o'clock we started afresh, and were

gaily pursuing our way, now over the crests of hills, and now in the bottom of stony gullies as a pleasing variety, when we were accosted by a Bedouin with whom we had some slight acquaintance, and he invited us to share the hospitality of his tent, which was within a short distance. Following him as he politely led our animals in the required direction, we found his dwelling pitched before a superb view of the Dead Sea, divinely blue in its cradle of purple mountains. The tribe contributed their whole stock of rugs and mats for our accommodation. The men did the entertaining in most gentlemanly manner, showing us their children, of whom they seemed devotedly fond ; the poor women, who were very good looking, with coins arranged like coronets round their heads, kept in the background. When shall this slavery, or rather suppression of women, come to an end in the East ?

A fire was quickly lighted, coffee roasted, and pounded in a wooden mortar to a certain time or rhythm such as Arabs love ; our host then presented some of it in the only two cups the tribe possessed, and excellent it proved. Thin cakes of flour and salt were baked in our presence, and eaten with butter from a dish placed in the midst. The

Bedouin sat and watched us as we ate and then partook of coffee themselves. All were armed with a number of different weapons, and certainly they are a handsome and well-made race. Numerous children were running about without any superfluous clothing, chickens had taken up their abode on the top of the brown camels'-hair tent, which also served as a manger for the "ship of the desert," while donkeys and horses in great variety were tethered round. For three days after an Arab has entertained a guest, even if a foe, that guest is free from all fear of molestation from him.

The visit ended, they led our animals back to the track, pointing out by the way the ruins of Mar Theodosius, and all this with the greatest gentleness and politeness.

When the Arabs parted from us we lost the way, and scrambled for hours over stony mountains, seeing occasionally little bits of cultivation, a wild fig or two, some Arab tents, and shepherds, with their sticks across their shoulders held by both hands, leading their flocks, till in the darkness we reached the steep and stony path which leads to Bethlehem. It was the occasion of a fête, and the front of the grand old church was illuminated

by lamps in the form of a cross, which threw their lurid light across the valley and far among the enfolding hills.

A drive of an hour and a half takes one to the pleasant village of Ain Karîm, reputed to be the place where St. John the Baptist was born. The road when we passed was in process of repair, fifty women, with three men to superintend them, being employed for the purpose. The first view of the village, embosomed in fertile hills, is very pretty. Russian pilgrims were making their weary way to the shrine of St. John, where we afterwards saw them busily kissing any object available for that purpose. The fountain of St. John was full of women washing, while the men looked on, stagnant water lying at their feet. The water of this spring is esteemed so pure, that it is brought into Jerusalem on the women's heads and there sold for a piastre a jar.

The visit to Ain Fâra (eye of a rat) is less easily made. Passing over the saddle between Mount Scopus and the Mount of Olives, soon, as is usual here, everything resembling civilisation is lost sight of, and the traveller finds himself at once in the bare rocky desert, among hills of lava upheaved when the world was in the process of

making, backed by the purple tints of Moab, with a faint glimpse now and then of the shimmering Dead Sea. We soon came to the little village of 'Anata, the ancient Anathoth, where many fragments of columns and portions of walls may be seen built into the modern cottages. Here are the very dilapidated ruins of a Crusader's church, and here Jeremiah was born—quite a suitable dwelling-place for a man of his cast of mind, and perhaps the cause of it. The half-savage people came out to look at us, and asked if we wanted a guide, and where we were going, but in no way molested us.

After this, hill upon hill of rocks, the little earth which has a lodging place among them scraped by the peasants' plough. Wild flowers were trying to push their heads up, and the crocuses were very successful. No sign of life met our eyes except here and there an Arab with a donkey carrying water all the way from Ain Fâra, which ran the risk of being seized by the Turkish soldiers for themselves and their horses, and paid for with a curse. Little stone villages bearing some Biblical appellation appeared occasionally in the distance, for this part of the country is particularly rich in Scriptural

associations. A clergyman who has deeply studied the subject thinks some of the Psalms of David were composed in this neighbourhood, from the resemblance of the scenery to the descriptions contained in those magnificent poems.

Missing the way a little, we had to dismount and lead our animals over slippery rocks, precipitous descents, and stony heights. Luckily we soon saw an Arab shepherd on the other side of a wady leading his flock of sheep and goats to water, and we managed to call him over to us. For backsheesh he said he would show us the way; he had his gun and we were unarmed, we were absolutely alone and in his power, but he acted with perfect good faith, and when he had carried out his bargain, took his bishlik gratefully. He handed us over to another fully-armed gentleman with a flint-locked gun, who guided us to Ain Fâra over one of the roughest paths it has ever been my lot to travel. Traces of the old Jewish terracing may be seen on every hillside, and most of them are crowned with the ruins of ruins. Occasionally a solitary camel and his driver passed, or a woman heavily laden.

We went about a mile up the wady amid running water and the green foliage of wild fig-

trees to a shady place between two high, overhanging rocks, where we rested. Above us was the late residence of some long dead hermit; to get to it you must climb up many feet, you thus come to a projecting ledge of rock in which is a round hole; you scramble to within a few feet of the hole on some stones placed for this purpose, and climb through its slippery sides on to the top of the ledge, where you may take breath; then after passing through a horizontal opening the adventurous visitor finds himself in one out of three rather large chambers, partly natural, partly chiselled out of the rock. There are many other caves here; the formation of the country seems to have tempted the inhabitants to become troglodites. Ruins of aqueducts, large buildings, mills, &c., lie strewn about in great quantities.

Then we rode back, a glorious sunset, which deluged the whole heavens above the Mount of Olives with crimson, finishing the pleasant day.

CHAPTER XVIII

HEBRON

"A country of hills changes but little; where the hills are of rock it changes not at all."—BEN HUR.

THE trip to Hebron, a town which shares with Damascus and Jaffa the reputation of being the oldest in the world, can be accomplished in carriages over an exceedingly well-made road. There is no romance, no danger about the journey; you select your carriage at the Jaffa gate, say "El Khalil" to the driver, and in four hours and a half you are in the city of Abraham. "El Khalil" simply means "the friend," and the Arabs call Hebron so, because it is said Abraham the founder was the friend of God. And here we are on no doubtful ground; I believe the most carping archæologist, the most captious explorer, the most cynical traveller, does not deny that the plain of Mamre stretched along the valley where now lies the town of Hebron—Kirjath-Arba—the place where Abraham buried his dead.

Just before reaching Bethlehem the road branches off to the right, and shortly after the remains of a Crusader's castle, behind which Solomon's Pools are situated, come in view. These three gigantic reservoirs are partly hewn in the solid rock, partly built of somewhat rough masonry, and lie one above another at short distances in the midst of a wild valley. The Arabs utilise the dry bottom of one as a garden. Here natives brought us some of the grapes for which the Valley of Eshcol was celebrated in Scripture days, and sweet indeed they proved to be.

After passing the Valley of the Tombs the scenery gets wilder and wilder, nothing but round hills covered with rocks are seen, in many places having the appearance of vast graveyards full of tombstones, and of villages and castles which have undergone recent bombardment.

A spring is soon reached, bubbling up amid very ancient masonry; around are remains of columns, and some rock-tombs mingled with the nameless white graves of the Bedouin. The very stones by the wayside look old and battered by many a century of storm and tempest; amid

them prowl jackals and hyænas. Then vineyards commence, enclosed with loose stone walls, between which you drive down the valley in which Hebron is situated.

The hills which enclose the valley on both sides are dotted with olive-trees; each end of it runs into vineyards. The square houses with domed roofs struggle up the sides of these hills. The Souk is one of the dirtiest and most picturesque possible, very extensive, with its tiny streets covered in most part with arched stone roofs, which, while sheltering the inhabitants from the fierce sun, create a perpetual gloom. The little shops contain a few eatables, dirty enough to take away even a schoolboy's appetite; in the midst the silk-robed and turbaned merchants sit flapping away flies, waiting for customers who never seem to come. In some, men were carding wool with a curious instrument resembling a one-stringed harp, beating the string with a wooden hammer to a certain measure, as Orientals always delight to do. The rebound of the string tears the fibres of the wool apart and very effectively cards it.

There is a good deal of traffic in the bazaars; donkeys and camels laden with unwieldy burdens

force their way over the filthy pavement amid the chattering crowd. Glass bracelets and rings, of which Arab women are so fond, and graceful water jars are manufactured here; the black goat-skins in such constant use to carry water are tanned in Hebron.

In the centre of the town is a large pool, be side which, it is said, David hanged the murderers of Ishbosheth; the steps leading down into it are nearly worn away by the feet of many generations: like Solomon's Pools, it was dry at this time of year (August). The hillside near is covered with numerous very old Mohammedan graves, and beyond is the quarantine building, where, when there is cholera in Mecca, the pilgrims who return are confined. Hebron shares with Nablous the reputation of being the most fanatical town in Palestine, and many of the inhabitants visit the distant shrine of the Prophet. A little while ago they would have no intercourse whatever with Christians, and now they are but little better. Children in the streets used to run after strangers, pelting them with stones and cursing them; on the occasion of our visit I am happy to say nothing of this kind occurred, but during the

Armenian troubles more fear was entertained for the safety of the missionaries at Hebron and Nablous than elsewhere.

When a medical mission was first established here the authorities stationed a soldier at the door to prevent people from entering the building; he was promptly kicked away by the doctor, and no further interference took place. The Greeks, who own much property in Hebron, wanted to make a road to their monastery; the Pasha to whom they applied told them they might do it on condition that they paid a Turkish lira for the first metre, two lire for the second, three for the third, and so on till it came to ninety lire for the ninetieth metre. Needless to add, that road remains unmade.

The great object of interest in Hebron is the mosque, which shares with those of Jerusalem, Mecca, and Medina the honour of being called a Hâram or sanctuary. It covers the cave of Machpelah, in which Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah are buried. Moslems say Joseph is also buried here, but we know from the Bible that the mummy of the Patriarch was deposited near Shechem.

The building is very much blocked up by modern houses, but so far as it can be examined appears to be an oblong enclosure, the walls of which, to the height of thirty-nine feet, are of large drafted stones, like those of the Jewish walls in Jerusalem : above this the Moslems have added some rough masonry. It has three entrances and two lofty minarets. The tradition which locates the cave of the field of Machpelah, "which Abraham bought for a possession of a burying-place of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre," in this place is, unlike most others, not greatly disputed.

As is well known, neither Christians nor Jews are ever allowed to enter this mosque ; they may only walk a few footsteps within one of the doors, where they see a hole in a wall in which Jews put letters written to Abraham. The very stone beyond which their all-defiling footsteps may not pass is exactly marked. We went on a terrace and tried to look down into the enclosure, and could see but little ; it is dangerous to attempt much, as the Hebronites are as lawless and savage a people as any in Judæa. However, I have seen photographs of the interior, the only ones ever taken. The Pasha of Jerusalem

wished for some, and sent a photographer to make them; he was refused admission. He came to the Pasha complaining, and the Pasha sent him to Hebron again with a file of soldiers at his back. On condition that he bathed and put on new clothes, the photographer was at last permitted to enter the sacred enclosure. The interior is plain as those of mosques usually are; the marble columns have debased Corinthian capitals, the floor is covered with rich carpets, and on each side of the handsome mimbar are two striped catafalques in the shape of a child's Noah's ark, surmounting the rock caves in which the Patriarchs lie buried. There are also three holes covered with stones in the floor of the Hâram and another uncovered, the interior of which is shown by thrusting down a lighted candle. More than this even Moslems never see. Six hundred years have elapsed since Christians were last permitted to enter.[1]

There are twenty thousand Moslems and one thousand Jews in Hebron. The latter have only quite lately begun to gain a footing there. Those

[1] The Prince of Wales, however, is an exception, and an account of his visit was written by Dean Stanley.

we saw were dressed in silk and velvet garments of the brightest imaginable hues, crimson, yellow, rose, violet, and a certain vivid blue, which seems to suit their taste only. The houses, with their small iron-barred windows, look like prisons; many are entered by a stone outside staircase without balustrades.

The Pool of Eshcol lies amid thick olive groves, and is now represented by a stone pipe, whence water flows from a spring much higher up the hills. I saw men and women congregated in the grateful shade, the men filling their goat-skins and the women their jars, which they carried gracefully on their shoulders. The latter are much more closely veiled than in Jerusalem. Often, however, they would remove their coverings when the gentlemen of the party had passed and ladies only could see them, and they seem rather ugly than otherwise. The most closely veiled are the black women. If you see a tall, slender figure swaying gracefully along, you may be sure she is black. Our black servant had a wife as ugly as a negress well can be. One day meeting her casually unveiled he became outrageously angry, nor did his marital fury subside for many days.

We happened to be in Hebron on the anniversary of the accession of the Sultan ; the minarets of the Harâm and the barracks were illuminated in honour of the occasion. A few fireworks, which caused great excitement among the natives and dogs, were let off, and the evening finished with loud explosions of gunpowder, and much singing to the accompaniment of drums and clapping of hands.

A walk of half-an-hour brings the traveller to the so-called Oak of Abraham. It grows on the terrace of a vineyard belonging to the Greeks, and its falling branches are most carefully propped up. The tree is a small-leaved evergreen oak. Of its four limbs two are dead ; those remaining alive still bear a thick mass of dark foliage. Pierced with worm-holes, and its trunk built up with stones, it is a reverend specimen of antiquity, resembling the Virgins' Tree at Heliopolis near Cairo. Arab children offer dead leaves, acorns, and pieces of bark for sale. Around it are acres of vines trailing their luscious burden on the ground.

In the fountain of Al Aaraf, by the wayside, men stripped of their clothing were immersing their thick-wooled, fat-tailed sheep, while their

neighbours sat and chatted in the grateful shade. Those who did not stretch themselves at full length on the ground did themselves up in parcels, their knees close to their chests, and their arms in some inexplicable attitude, as is the wont of Arabs. A Jewish funeral passed, the body simply wrapped in a sheet, and boys and men chanting noisily round it.

The call to prayer from a minaret in Hebron at four in the morning was the most musical I have ever heard. The mueddin sang most floridly but in tune, the words reverberating through the dawn, "La ilâha ill allâh," &c. I have often heard this call by day and night, but I never saw carpets unfolded and prayers said at the time, though I have watched Moslems praying, as they thought alone, and in the streets. If they have no carpet, they take off their abbâs, lay them reverently on the ground, take off their shoes, and so pray to Him who knows no distinction of creeds.

On the return journey, leaving the spreading vineyards of Hebron, we passed again through the wild region I have before attempted to describe. I feel I cannot insist too much upon the

wildness and rockiness of Judæa if I wish to convey a correct impression. Hill after hill, resembling huge piles of stones, stretch away on every side as far as the eye can reach, contrasting forcibly with the verdant Vale of Eshcol. The summits are naked stones, the lower portions varied with scanty thorny plants. They are divided into terraces, partly natural, partly remains of the ancient terrace-work for which the Jews were famous, and to which the geological formation easily lends itself. It appears to me (but I am no geologist) as if a succession of lava flows had inundated the land at periods with very distinct intervals between. Each layer is a different thickness, and is easily split off from the one above it. The heat of the upper ones has sometimes rent the lower perpendicularly. The Jews have chosen some of the thickest of these layers, perhaps twenty feet in thickness, where there is a scarp formed by the fall of a portion of the rock, in which to excavate the tombs of which one sees such innumerable specimens throughout the length and breadth of the land. They seem to have been essentially a rock-burrowing people. There is a channel cut in the rock above the Ain Sitti Miriam, in the valley of the Kedron,

five hundred and eighty-six yards long, so low in places that a man can only creep through lying down. I wonder how the workmen felt in this long, dark, hot passage, day after day, year after year, chipping laboriously at the solid rock.

CHAPTER XIX

THE CAVE OF ADULLAM, FRANK MOUNTAIN, AND ARTÂS

"Nobody, I think, ought to read poetry, or look at pictures or statues, who cannot find a great deal more in them than the poet or artist has actually expressed. Their highest merit is suggestiveness."—HAWTHORNE.

A PARTY, consisting of two English gentlemen, a Turkish effendi, and our two selves started before nine o'clock one October morning for an excursion to the cave of Adullam, the Frank Mountain, and the village of Artâs. The weather was all that could be desired, the warmth of the sun being tempered by gentle breezes, and occasionally grey clouds flitted across the bright blue sky. Our Turk, on his gaily caparisoned steed, galloped proudly to and fro, his rich garments floating grandly behind him as he rode, while the animal seemed to share his master's pride and to spurn the earth he trod.

Our way was at first the well-known road to Bethlehem, through which village we passed, and after threading its dirty, tortuous little lanes

emerged into the wilderness of Engedi. A few vineyards seemed to struggle out to meet the desert, and some olive-trees, of which men, women, and children were gathering the fruit by beating them with long canes, pushed forward into its boundaries; but all this soon ended, and nothing save round-topped stony hills and dry water-courses, unrelieved by any kind of vegetation, succeeded. No trace now remains of the palm-trees mentioned by Josephus. After a time we saw a few camels feeding, and flocks of sheep and goats browsing on what seemed to be the roots of burnt-up grass, tended by savage-looking Arabs, armed with long brass-bound guns and large scimitars, all of a uniform grey colour. Animals, hills, and men were blended in one rich monotonous tint. One of the great characteristics of Eastern scenery is this sameness of colouring; the houses and ruins are scarcely distinguishable from the rocks on which they are built. The animals are of the same hue. What vegetation exists is discovered with difficulty, and the clothing of the inhabitants blends with their surroundings. The atmosphere, quivering with heat, wraps all things in the same universal tint of yellow-grey.

The Frank Mountain (so called because the Crusaders held out there a long time against the Saracens) is said, with great probability, to be the site of the Herodium of Herod, a fort and palace which he built as a defence against the southern tribes, and where he was buried. Dying at Jericho, his body was brought here with great pomp and buried, but no monument remains to mark the site of the tyrant's tomb.

The top of the mound is artificial, and though it rises at an angle of 35°, our donkeys bravely carried us to the summit. There may be seen some ruined walls surrounding a depression like a crater, and in a vault are the remains of a mosaic floor. The whole, as it once existed, is elaborately described by Josephus in his "Wars of the Jews." At the foot of the hill is a dry pool, with a small island in the centre, called by the Arabs "Birket es Bint," or Pool of the Sultan's daughter.

After descending, the road became exceedingly rough, but we soon reached the very ruinous remains of Khorêitun, sublimely situated in the cleft of a stupendous ravine. The scenery here is most imposing, reminding one

of Mar Saba. Passing along a path on the border of a precipice, where the donkeys and horses had to be led, we came to the base of an awful rock, down the abrupt sides of which a little water trickled into a bed of stones, through which it disappeared. Beneath yawned the savage wady, above the rocks seemed to shut out half the sky.

Here we lunched in the presence of three fully armed Bedouin who volunteered their company, and then proceeded to the Cave of Adullam.

The traveller passes over huge boulders, under overhanging rocks, and crosses deep clefts on hands and knees. The cave is high up the side of the gorge, and is approached by a terrace formed in the rock, which either by art or nature is very narrow. A huge fallen block about seven feet high has to be surmounted; between this and the upper rock is a space of two and a half feet. Continuing along the ledge he comes to another fallen block, and mounting this he is confronted by the opening of the cave. In front of the entrance are two large blocks of rock some seven feet high, which would weigh over a ton each.

Passing over one of these we found ourselves at last in a small passage leading to a spacious chamber thirty-eight yards long, from which several passages diverge. These consist of a series of galleries, sometimes so low as to be passable only by lying down quite flat, and propelling yourself along as best you can in that uncomfortable attitude with a candle in your hand, at others expanding into huge chambers. Of course the darkness is "darkness that may be felt," and the only sound heard is the shrill whistle of the bats and the rush of their wings, as startled they fly from side to side. When lighted up by magnesium wire the roofs of these chambers look like domes ornamented with stalactites; the action of water trickling down the walls has ornamented them with patterns which resemble Arabic writing; the result is very beautiful, reminding one of the decoration of the walls of the Alhambra.

In one place it is necessary to climb up ten feet, in another to descend as many; between each chamber you must creep as best you may, candle in hand. The temperature is very high, and the expedition resembles that to the in-

terior of the great Pyramid. Those who have made either will not easily forget the sensation caused by the heat, the darkness, and the thought of the immense mass of stone which hangs above them.

Curious recesses vary the surfaces of the walls, and in one chamber light is admitted by a hole through which the abyss of the wady may be seen. Footsteps have a hollow sound, another series of caves as yet unexplored lying underneath.

When we arrived at the first low passage our effendi became frightened and turned back, losing his way in so doing. Luckily we found him again, sitting in terror on the ground, very unlike the brilliant being who had disported himself so proudly on his steed in the open daylight.

In this enormous hollow in the earth, it will be remembered, King David and four hundred of his followers took refuge. There is probably room in it for as many more.

The Rev. W. F. Birch, in the Palestine Exploration Society's Quarterly Statement for October 1895, identifies this cave and rock with the rock of Etam where Samson lay in hiding.

Khorêitun, he says, is derived from the Hebrew *chor*, a cave, and *eitun* from Etam. Bonar, in his "Land of Promise," after admitting that the Cave of Adullam was probably the cave of Khorêitun, thus describes its appearance: "We gazed upon the vast precipices that fronted us, and down into the horrible rent beneath us, that seemed a split in the very foundations of the earth, as if some of its bars (Jonah xi. 6) had snapped and opened a seam in its lowest base."

On the formation of the numerous natural caverns in the limestone rock, which is the rock most commonly found in Palestine, Professor Deans thus writes in the "Bible Educator": "All limestone districts are full of caves, fissures, and hollows. The rocks are penetrated more or less by cracks and fissures; those which have been subjected to much uptilting and contortion will, of course, be more affected with fissures and clefts than others. Into these rain-water from the surface penetrates; this rain-water having previously passed through the surface soil, filled with decaying vegetation, becomes charged with carbonic and organic acids. Thus charged it is capable of dissolving the limestone, and so in course of

years the rock becomes disintegrated and hollowed into caverns."

Leaving the Cave of Adullam we rode down a rough valley, at the bottom of which are the ever green and fertile gardens of Artâs. They are said to have been the gardens of King Solomon. The delicious green foliage which greets the traveller coming from stony, arid Engedi is like a breath of cool air after a long khamsin.

The village of Artâs presents nothing remarkable; like all other native villages it is small and dirty.

On the way back the aqueduct may still be seen which once conveyed water to Jerusalem, and does so still as far as Bethlehem. It consists of a low wall of rough stonework enclosing earthenware pipes. I was told the Baroness Burdett-Coutts offered to repair this aqueduct and render it once more available for conveying water to the Holy City, but the Turks refused to accept her princely offer because she declined to give them backsheesh!

Another conduit connected with the water-supply of ancient Jerusalem is still to be seen. Josephus speaks of one of them as being about four hundred stadia in length. The stone siphon

pipes in which water was conveyed from a lower to a higher level are very remarkable; in many of the conduits are holes from which water is drawn at the present day.

I have in the foregoing pages humbly attempted to present a sketch of the most interesting city in the world and its surroundings as they appeared to a traveller without any preconceived impressions whatever—to draw the bare outline of a scene which every one will fill up for himself according to his own intuitions.

That Jerusalem is not a modern Paradise will be easily gleaned from this description, and those who, not possessing ample means, endeavour to explore it will suffer not a little inconvenience. But the reward is very rich, for no city under the sun possesses such varied interests, such picturesque scenes, such stupendous reminiscences. The view from every window is a picture in itself, every passer-by a model ready to the painter's hand, every street a scene of surpassing interest to artist, author, and sightseer. I have not attempted to deal with my subject from a religious point of view; many others more suited to the task than I have already exhausted it.

If Jerusalem be not a Paradise, it is not wanting in the necessities and conveniences of modern life; the traveller may live as comfortably there as in any of the more frequented Oriental cities. May the time be far distant when it shall be changed from its primitive picturesqueness and semi-barbarity into that mongrel product of civilisation, a Frenchified Arab town.

The days of the Crusaders, when war-worn warriors fell on their knees and wept at the sight of the Holy City, are passed never to return; but we who live in these later times of doubt and research may still be pardoned if we feel more profoundly enthusiastic, more deeply moved as we gaze for the first time on the venerable walls of Jerusalem, than on the site of any other city the earth can boast.

If to those who are denied this satisfaction I succeed in giving some idea of what Jerusalem *really* is, my matter-of-fact object will have been accomplished.

CHAPTER XX

JERUSALEM TO JENIN

"The physical character of Palestine is remarkable; there is no other country which, within the same limits, contains so many contrasts, or exhibits features at once so varied and comprehensive that, as has been justly observed, there is no land or nation in the world which does not find something of itself reflected there."—Sir CHARLES WARREN.

IN May 1895 five persons left Jerusalem for a tour through the Holy Land and part of Syria. The party consisted of a gentleman engaged in mission work, who had been for years in the country and could speak a little Arabic; Mahomet, a small wiry Arab, whose father had been servant to Holman Hunt; Raschied, the owner of the horses, whose duty it was to groom and feed them, a sort of effendi in his way, and who wore a satin dress and English gaiters; and a lady friend and myself, two seasoned travellers, used to the various customs of different parts of the world.

We took a small tent, a portmanteau containing changes of clothing, some tinned meat, tea, sugar, and coffee; these things, together with painting

materials and a rifle, were put on a pack-horse, and on top of them Mahomet sat with that dignity which never forsakes an Arab, notwithstanding that a saucepan hung dangling outside his packages. We had also a thin mattress called a lehaff and two rugs, but alas! were pillowless all through our journey, and we learnt that saddles and paint-boxes are not satisfactory substitutes.

We set out at four o'clock in the afternoon in order to reach Râmallah, three hours' journey from Jerusalem, by nightfall. (Distances are always measured by time here.) We travelled along the North Road, the great caravan route to Damascus from time immemorial; it is of the roughest description, up and down on rocks and rolling stones till one wonders how animals find a footing at all on the uneven surface. I shall have a great deal to say about these Syrian roads, which are simply narrow tracks around, down, or over barren, desolate stony mountains, remarkable for their sharp contrast with the fertile plains sometimes spread out at their feet. However, we reached our destination at seven o'clock as we had proposed.

Râmallah is a pretty village situated among

vineyards, and inhabited chiefly by Christians; at the house of a pastor there we were kindly invited to dine and spend the night. But, anxious to commence our journey as it was to be continued, my friend and I rejected the room placed at our disposal and had our little tent pitched in their garden, our Arab rolling himself up in his abbâ and lying down to sleep beside it. During the night one of the most fearful thunderstorms I have ever witnessed broke over the country; the whole heavens were a sheet of flame, and thunder roared continuously from every point of the compass. This was the farewell of winter. The tent was illuminated from side to side, and the rain poured down and ran under our single rug. Bitterly we regretted our choice of the tent; but at last daylight broke, the storm was over, and that complete calm which in these regions succeeds a tempest followed.

It was near Râmallah that a shepherd boy found ten Jewish shekels and half-shekels cemented in a hollow stone. Throwing pebbles idly at a piece of rock, as any one is likely to do when sitting down to rest, one of them broke it, and disclosed these valuable coins in a

perfect state of preservation. He took them to Jerusalem, where they realised a handsome sum.

At seven in the morning we continued our journey over a road as rough as that of the day before, and soon found ourselves enveloped in a thick Scotch mist, which wet us thoroughly. There is a good deal of cultivation about this elevated region; the natives are very savage; indeed, the savageness of the inhabitants of this country is one of the most noticeable things about them. The ancient Ataroth was situated about here, and at El Bireh (Beeroth) tradition will have it that Mary and Joseph first discovered the absence of the child Jesus as they returned home to Nazareth from the Feast of the Passover at Jerusalem.

Passing a khân scarcely distinguishable from the rocks among which it is situated, cattle browsing on the roof, we visited the "Robbers' Spring" and various rock caves in which the graceful maiden-hair fern hung down in massive bunches. A few ruins only mark the site of the Shiloh of Scripture. After this the road gets rougher and rougher if possible, and one of our horses fell and broke his knees. After two slight accidents I had finally rejected that

horse, and I felt thankful not to have been on him when he fell; the Arab who mounted him after I did only alighted on his feet smiling, and no damage was done.

The road now skirts the base of Mount Gerizim, and here we were encountered by some youths who threw stones at us, as is the pleasant custom of the inhabitants of this favoured region; however, we got off our horses in the midst of them to visit Jacob's Well. This was at six o'clock in the evening, and we had been in the saddle since seven.

Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb, which lie near together, are two of the least disputed sites in Palestine. Tired of doubt and the perpetual reiteration of the phrase "said to be," memory looks back with satisfaction to that calm spring evening when these two celebrated memorials of the past met the eye.

The well is in possession of the Greeks, who have bought it from the Turkish Government for seventy thousand piastres. Entering the enclosure a monk shows you a well seventy-five feet deep amid the ruins of the church that once covered it; a miserable altar only surmounts it now. We tasted the water, and

found it sweet and good. A little while ago the spot was unenclosed, wild and picturesque; now it is walled in, put in order, and most unpoetical in appearance.

The tradition locating Jacob's Well here dates from the fourth century, but as usual I waive all discussions of these subjects which I am not qualified to enter into, and perhaps few readers would care to read, contenting myself with remarking that, according to the weight of testimony, we stand here on the undoubted site of the Patriarch's Well.

Here, then, once came One who, tired and weary, asked a woman from the neighbouring town of Shechem for a draught of water. When He found that, having given it, she was anxious to hear His doctrine, forgetful of fatigue He taught on this very spot the glorious truths, "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Have the two thousand years elapsed since that utterance taught us any greater truth, or led us farther into the regions of the unknown and unknowable? Does not all knowledge on this subject begin and end with these words spoken to a woman at Jacob's Well in Samaria?

Joseph's Tomb looks like one of the welys or graves of saints and sheiks commonly seen in Mohammedan countries—a square building with a dome, whitewashed.

We now turned westward and entered the deep valley lying between Mounts Gerizim and Ebal, in which lies the ancient city of Nablous. The name is a corruption of that given it by the Romans, Neapolis, but anciently it was called Sichem or Shechem, and was one of the cities of refuge. Moses commanded curses against the wicked to be thundered from Mount Ebal, and blessings for righteousness to be uttered from Mount Gerizim; and here Joshua, a man of war, worn out in their service, gathered together the tribes of Israel, and exacted from them before he died a promise to worship the Lord only.

At the gate of the town the Turkish guards peremptorily demanded our teskerés or permissions to travel in Syria, which had cost us five francs each, and five hours' running from place to place in Jerusalem to find the five officials whose business it appeared to be to describe our personal appearances on them. Having produced these documents we were

permitted to proceed to the beautifully situated town, and were glad to rest at last in the Latin monastery. A few years ago it was not possible for Christians to enter Nablous safely; now one only risks a stone or two.

In this most fanatical town reside all that still exists of the ancient sect of Samaritans, who maintain their form of worship there. Between them, Jews, Moslems, Latins, and Greeks disputes run very high. Their temple, built in opposition to that at Jerusalem, has long been utterly destroyed; but at the Feast of the Passover the poor remains of this once powerful sect still repair to the top of Mount Gerizim, where they believe the Tabernacle is, and where Abraham offered Isaac, and kill a solemn sacrifice of seven lambs in accordance with the Mosaic ritual. The Samaritans say they are the true Israel, and accept only the five Books of Moses, rejecting all tradition. During another visit to Nablous I was present at the sacrifice.

As the Jews excluded the Samaritans from participation in their religious rites, and refused their aid in building the walls and Temple of Jerusalem, the latter built a city and sanctuary

of their own. Mount Gerizim was chosen as the site of their Temple, and amid the masses of ruin which now crown its summit twelve rough stones and a large flat rock still represent the Holy of Holies of the Samaritans.

At the present day there are only one hundred and fifty of these ancient people in existence. They inhabit a separate quarter of Nablous (they are not known in any other town), where they possess a mean little synagogue. The office of High-Priest is hereditary, and their service is held in the Samaritan dialect. They have a codex of the Pentateuch, which they declare to have been written by a grandson or great-grandson of Aaron; this they take with them up Mount Gerizim when they celebrate the Passover, and there we saw it, carefully guarded, in the tent of the High-Priest.

The Samaritans celebrate all the Mosaic festivals as enjoined in the Book of Leviticus, but offer living sacrifices at the Passover only. Until within the last few years it was dangerous for Christians to attempt to be present at this celebration, which is the only living sacrifice still offered by a civilised people. Last spring, being in Jerusalem, a friend and I de-

termined to ride to Nablous and see this unique ceremony.

Leaving Jerusalem at three o'clock in the afternoon we reached Râmallah after three hours' hard riding over the inexpressible stones of Palestine, passing by the way many interesting Biblical sites. The monks at the Latin Convent declined to receive us for the night as they expected some priests, and thought they ought to have the preference, so we went to the American Quaker Mission House, where we were most hospitably received and kindly treated. We had only a native servant with us, and he and the animals always took refuge in the khâns. As we entered Râmallah about two thousand Russian pilgrims arrived from Nazareth, so weary and footsore that many of them lay down in the streets to sleep as soon as they reached them. At daylight in the morning we heard them depart singing their lovely hymns.

At six in the morning we too went on our way. The roads here are so stony that travellers jump their beasts over the low stone walls and ride along the sides of the fields. We passed Bizeh (where are the ruins of a church built on the spot where Mary and Joseph discovered the

absence of Jesus), Betîn, the ancient Bethel, and Ain el Haramîyeh, or the Robbers' Spring; shortly after the road became so steep that we had to dismount and walk down to the Khân Lubban, where, amid natives making a light repast on handfuls of green lentils, we too ate our frugal lunch. Then, riding through the Wady Bedowîyeh, we crossed the plain of El Makhna, covered with green barley, caught a glimpse of Joseph's Tomb again, and, passing between Mounts Gerizim and Ebal, reached the English Mission House at Nablous at a quarter to four.

We had been told in Jerusalem that the sacrifice would take place on April 5th, and, in consequence, started for Nablous on the 3rd to rest after travelling; we were therefore rather dismayed to learn on our arrival that it occurred that very evening, and that we must lose no time in ascending the mountain. This is no unusual experience in the East, no one ever being able to give correct information as to dates and periods. So, tired as we were after ten hours and a half in the saddle, there was nothing for it but to go on. The Samaritans encamp on the summit for seven days

before they celebrate the feast, and when we had ascended the stony, steep, and altogether detestable road we saw about twenty tents neatly arranged on a piece of land rather less rocky than the rest. There was also a goodly sprinkling of Arabs, some of the omnipresent Turkish soldiery to keep order, and a very few Europeans. The soldiers we were glad to see, having on all such occasions found their presence most necessary, and themselves good-natured and obliging.

Samaritans are of a very marked type; they are tall, thin, have large noses, carroty hair, and are exceedingly unhealthy in appearance. The priests wore white dresses and pale yellow turbans wound over the universal fez; the chief priest's garment would have delighted the eyes of an æsthete with its pale, faded green tones.

They were busy with their preparations. A pit lined with stone, from ten to twelve feet deep and four feet across, was already filled with burning wood. The priests sat in a ring on a little carpet round the High-Priest, who was also on his little carpet. They prayed in Samaritan in most monotonous voices, resembling the

bleating of sheep more than any other noise with which I am acquainted. After a time they all rose, the High-Priest mounting a portion of a fallen column and reading something out of a book while the others stood round. At this moment the disc of the full moon rose from behind the hoary mountain top, while the last burning rays of the setting sun tinted the smoke from the oven, the tents, and the gaily-costumed crowd a brilliant red, making the scene more weird, if possible, than it was before. Let the reader imagine the multi-coloured Arabs, blacks, richly-robed Turks, picturesque soldiers, ring of white-robed priests, snowy tents, gaily-comparisoned animals picketed in the distance, wild and rocky scenery illumined by the double light of silver from the moon and gold from the sun, and he will not easily recall a more weird and singular scene.

We visited the seven unfortunate lambs about to be sacrificed; Moses ordered that they should be "white, without spot or blemish," but one of these was black and another had a brown head. We also visited the tents, where we were courteously received, and invited to take coffee.

About sunset seven priests gathered round two huge caldrons of boiling water; each seized a lamb, threw it to the ground, and knife in hand waited for the last ray of the sun; as the round, red orb dipped below the horizon they dexterously cut their victims' throats, not a sound or cry being heard. They then, ladling out the water, poured it over the carcasses, plucked off the wool, and removed the entrails. While this was being done the interested crowd, wrought up to a pitch of wild excitement, became quite unruly; the soldiers used their sticks furiously, and beat many of them over the heads and shoulders. They were, however, very kind to us, protected us, and saw we had the very best places.

The lambs, prepared as I have described, were impaled on poles as long as the oven was deep. Much more praying then took place, and at last the fuel being burnt out and the stones red-hot, the poles on which the carcasses were skewered were put down into the pit, which was then covered with branches and earth.

In about an hour and a half (an interval occupied by the Samaritans in prayer) the sheep were taken out of the oven by some of the priests

wearing gloves, and placed in baskets. One carcass accidentally slipped off the stake and fell back into the pit; the priest in whose charge it was went down into the steaming hole and brought it up again, picking up every fragment carefully as he did so.

A cloth was spread on the ground, the roasted sheep placed on it in baskets, and the Samaritans, sitting down in groups of seven, tore the flesh to pieces and ate it. Forty-nine ate at one time, and when they had finished forty-nine others sat down to the banquet. Fragments were sent to the tents for the women, and the bones and refuse carefully collected and burnt. All was not over till midnight. Then the motley crowd melted away, stumbling, some mounted and some on foot, down the steep and stony slopes of Mount Gerizim.

The awe attending this ceremonial was intensified on this occasion by confused shouts and lamentations which arose at one part of the proceedings, occasioned by the sudden death of a woman in one of the tents. No Samaritan could touch the body, as it would render him unclean according to the Levitical law. Therefore they closed the tent, intending after the ceremony to

burn the spot with fire, and Moslems had to perform the necessary last offices.

The good monks at the Latin monastery were evidently so much occupied with their doctrinal wrangles, that they had no time for other duties, and as a matter of fact dirt often goes hand in hand with monasticism, which might account for the number of live stock in their abode; however, they only charge three francs a day without food. The porter had a magnificent glass bottle for sale which was found in a tomb; as we could not carry it we did not enter into negotiations for its purchase. Numerous relics of this kind may still be had here, but it is necessary to be very careful in buying them, as manufacturers of "antîkas" are numerous, and absurdly skilful.

We walked about Nablous attended by our Mohammedan servant, as no European woman can go out alone unless she choose to wear the all-concealing garments of the native women. The town is most picturesque, full of quaint bits of Saracenic and Crusading architecture and vaulted streets, but the inhabitants are insolent and notoriously wicked. The door of the great mosque (to which it is almost impossible to gain

admittance) resembles somewhat that of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In company with a lady who had lived many years in Nablous we had the rare privilege of visiting some native houses. In the first, that of a Prince, the ladies of the harem were running about in ragged cotton dresses and drawers; the courtyards were picturesque and dilapidated. Another house was that of a man with four wives: one was then at Constantinople, one was a lunatic, and two we saw. The last object of his affections was an extremely lovely girl of sixteen, with a baby four months old in her arms. Passing through the men's court into the women's court (in all these houses the apartments of the women are most completely separated from those of the men), we were shown into a very large room covered with rich rugs. Round the walls chairs covered with cotton were arranged; at one end was a handsome bed; the rest of the furniture of the untidy room consisted of an inlaid chest of drawers, a handsome cradle, a sword and gun, and two vile chromolithographs of landscapes. It seems the custom for all the members of the families of both wives and husbands to live together, and here they all

were, the daughter of a former wife much older than the present possessor of that dignity. They were all very friendly, and smoked, talked, and laughed freely with us.

If it be true, as Stevenson observes, "that to travel hopefully is better than to arrive, and the true success is to labour," we had plenty of the former and an unlimited supply of the latter, for our days were very busy, and we were as tired as it often falls to the lot of mortals to be by the evening. Then a rough meal, and a sleep or doze on the earth in the stuffy atmosphere of the tent, and away again early next morning.

At eight our *cortège* was again *en route*, and in a couple of hours after leaving the olive groves of Nablous we reached the town of Sebastiyeh, Samaria, or Sebaste, the first its Arabic, the second its Hebrew, the last its Roman name. Once the capital of the kingdom of Israel, it was several times destroyed, and rebuilt with great magnificence by Herod the Great, only to be destroyed again.

The fine ruins of a Crusaders' church, now converted into a mosque, at the entrance to the modern village are supposed to mark the burial-

place of John the Baptist. A descent of twenty-one steps in the dark leads to the actual spot. In and about this interesting town are scattered many fragments of buildings, and numerous columns, which once supported an arcade running through it, still rear aloft their discrowned heads.

The situation of one of the old gates may still be traced, flanked by the foundations of enormous towers. Looking from the gate over the fertile plain below, one can see in imagination the camp of the Syrians who made war against Jehoram, King of Israel, hear the cries of the famine-stricken people in the city, and the hopeful voice of the prophet saying, "To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel in Samaria." Possibly the four leprous men sat at this gate saying, "Why sit we here till we die? Let us fall into the hands of the Syrians," went from here into the empty camp, and came back and told the king how the tents were deserted; and so the Israelites spoiled the tents of the Syrians, and Elisha's prophesy was fulfilled. Standing on that hill in Samaria, the whole drama seems to unfold itself before you, though

the scene is peaceful enough to-day, and only a stately Arab stalks now and then amid the ruined columns and grey olive-trees.

On the opposite side of the town is what antiquaries say is the site of an amphitheatre, and the plateau on which Ahab's ivory palace perhaps stood.

We ate our lunch under a spreading fig-tree, the shade unbroken by a single ray of the burning sun, so thick is the foliage of these trees, and admired the beauty of the natives and the elegance of their costume. Some women in long blue robes parching corn on an old threshing-floor were especially picturesque. It was harvest time there, though spring time with us, and the peasants slowly reaping, gleaners at work, and camels carrying corn so heavily laden that they looked like animated wheat-stacks, added to the beauty of the peaceful landscape.

At two o'clock we started again, passing over broad fertile plains, where innumerable cattle and flocks of sheep were grazing. How pleasant it was to ride amid flowers reaching to the horses' flanks, and on level roads through wheat-fields, instead of along dry, rocky watercourses, and on narrow tracks up and down eternal hills of stone!

A fox ran across our path, and golden eagles soared in the serene air, bright with the last rays of the westering sun.

We got to the pretty town of Jenin by eight o'clock, a town whose inhabitants are most fanatical, and which, lying low amid olives and palms, is every few years decimated by fever.

Having pitched our tent on the camping-ground, we were shortly visited by the Sheik of the place, who informed us it was imperatively necessary to have a soldier to guard us during the night, and accordingly we engaged one. He arrived, bringing his chair with him, and prepared to spend the night, as is the custom of sentinels here, in whistling to his neighbour every ten minutes or less. Near us was the encampment of a party of rich Americans, who had brought dining, kitchen, and sleeping tents, and dragomans, cooks, and waiters with them. One of them travelled in a palanquin carried by two mules.

Night came on, and we retired to rest amid the hooting of owls, the shrill and disagreeable screams of jackals, but worst of all, the constant whistling of our sentinel. Towards morning he fell asleep in his chair, and we did so too.

CHAPTER XXI

JENIN TO TIBERIAS

"Et les flots bleus, que rien ne gouverne et n'arrête
Disaient en recourbant l'ecume de leur crête
C'est le seigneur, le seigneur Dieu!"
—Victor Hugo.

Striking the tent at six o'clock we rode through Jenin, enjoying a lovely retrospective view of that most picturesque of villages, with its tall white minaret gleaming in the morning sun. Our road lay over the magnificent plain of Esdraelon, the heart of Palestine, now covered with golden corn in all its summer beauty. On each side dim blue mountains bound the horizon, at our feet flourished the most luxuriant vegetation.

We rested at a well where hundreds of cattle had been driven for their mid-day supply of water, the only one they would get for twenty-four hours. The water was drawn in leathern buckets, and poured into portions of old columns hollowed out as troughs.

How impressive was that vast plain, covered

with a carpet of flowers of the richest colouring! If the bold outlines of mountain scenery impress the beholder with a sense of majesty, a long low plain, the termination of which is wrapped in the mysterious blue of the atmosphere barred with the trembling shadows of clouds, creates a more profound sense of vastness and infinitude![1]

The contrast was very sharp between the luxuriance of cornfields and flowers and the stony paths we had left, to traverse which represents both self-denial and endurance. A little hard bread, a little water in a porous bottle, and an Arab will go anywhere, thankful if he can add to his scanty menu a handful of onion tops, or a cucumber eaten with the skin on.

We are now in a district rich in associations with Scripture history; the bare mountains of Gilboa rise on the eastern horizon, the small villages of Nain and Endor, with their squalid mud huts and rock tombs, lie on our right, while in the distance stands the conical mass

[1] Sir Charles Warren (than whom there seems to me no better authority as to the topography of the Holy Land) remarks: "The broad expanse of the Philistine plain, covered as it is at harvest-time with a waving mass of golden grain, unbroken by a single hedge, is one of the most beautiful sights in Palestine. The effect of the views is increased by the transparency of the atmosphere, which diminishes apparent distances in a manner unknown in moister climes."

of Mount Tabor. The road gets rough again; a precipice before us is that over which it is said the Nazarenes attempted to throw Jesus Christ; we then ascend a stony hill over which the horses climb like goats, and see before us a white village situated on one side of an amphitheatre of hills. It is Nazareth (En Nasîra). It has a new appearance, and is somewhat disappointing in the matter of picturesqueness.

Our tent was pitched in the middle of what might be called the village green, and we were soon surrounded by vendors of bread, fruit, and water. Some Arabs were galloping across it, mounted on the most magnificent horses I have seen in Palestine, but heavier than we are accustomed to picture the "Arab steed." They were richly caparisoned, and their riders wore flowing draperies of gay colours, presenting a splendid spectacle when at full gallop. But an Arab's gallop is like a donkey's, short; their usual pace is a lazy amble.

I had already concluded from a study of the guide-book that there was only one really authentic site in Nazareth—St. Mary's Well, indisputable because it is the only spring in

the place, and therefore necessarily often visited by the Holy Family. To this well we therefore took our way before even attempting to rest.

The water rises in a well in the half-underground church of St. Gabriel or of the Annunciation, belonging to the Greeks. The custodian draws from the well some very clear water and offers it to the traveller. The church is very old and picturesque, and numerous birds have taken shelter in the ceiling, and fly unmolested from picture frame to picture frame. From this spring a conduit conveys the water to St. Mary's Well, which is now arched over; here the women of Nazareth resort to draw water, gossip, and quarrel with great zest, as they have done any time for at least two thousand years. Their costumes are particularly elegant, consisting of a simple straight dress reaching to the ankles, worn over full drawers, and a long white veil which falls gracefully down the back.

Civilisation and changes may be good, but still it is intensely interesting to visit scenes where the hand of time has stopped. There are, however, but few places now left untouched by modern improvements; even out-of-the-world

Nazareth has lost part of its original Oriental appearance, through the erection of numerous churches, monasteries, and schools.

For half-an-hour at a time have I watched the animated scene at St. Mary's Well, the brilliantly clothed, loud-voiced, and handsome women laden with the black water jars they poise so dexterously on their heads, camels and donkeys drinking from the old sarcophagus which serves as a trough, superb Arabs caracolling on their thoroughbred mares, and mischievous children playing by the roadside, all inundated by the fierce Syrian sun which makes the earth white and the scanty shadows blue. Truly to visit such scenes is a privilege to be grateful for, and I wish I could impart even a tenth of the pleasure they gave me. These chapters, however, are only a painter's rude sketches, not the finished pictures of a word-artist, and their only merit is that of being done on the spot.

The next day we explored the picturesque little Souk or market-place. The streets are narrow, steep, and paved, having water-courses down the middle. Inquiring for photographs, we were shown into the house of a bride of

three days, wearing an elaborate yellow satin dress, purple velvet jacket embroidered with gold, a crown of tinsel ornamented with orange blossoms, seven necklaces, rings innumerable on her fingers, and having her abundant hair strung with coins hanging down her back. She invited us to drink rose-water with her, and then kindly directed us to our destination.

Meantime our dinner had been prepared, and we ate it sitting round the dish in Arab fashion. We had plates, but Arabs take morsels most dexterously from the dish in little pieces of their thin soft bread, and so dispense with these utensils and knives and forks as well. They have indeed reduced existence to its simplest elements. One dish which is often the saucepan, a water-bottle, and for the more prosperous a few coffee-cups and some rugs, such are the necessaries of life to them. But no Arab is without flint and steel, a brass-bound gun sometimes six feet in length, a knife, and often a formidable club besides. Many of them gravely and politely squatted round us while we ate.

Our teskerés were once more demanded by a gorgeous official with a cigarette in his

mouth, who said he also required one for the gun. This not being produced, he intimated that "for a consideration" he would forego his legal demand. His proposal not being entertained, he went away saying he would inquire into the matter, but we saw him no more. I persuaded an Arab to pose as a model; he was a very fine gentleman, with the air of a prince, but the sitting over, he seated himself on the ground, and graciously accepted a quarter of a medjidieh for his trouble.

I never heard such fearful howlings of dogs as I did that night; there seemed to be hundreds on every hill (and the hills are not few), keeping up a running chorus which lasted till daylight.

The reader who has read thus far will have become aware that I have no stirring adventures, no hairbreadth escapes to relate in this simple diary of Two Years in the Holy Land and Syria; and moreover, that I have not the wish to excite astonishment by exaggerations such as that of an Irish Australian I once met in Cairo, who having bought a "handful" of old stamps, declared there were some of Rameses the Great among them!

In Nazareth the behaviour of the people contrasted strongly with that of those of Nablous, for they were always kind and polite. They number seven thousand five hundred, chiefly Christians.

The Latin Church of the Annunciation is supposed to mark the place where the angel Gabriel visited the Virgin Mary, and in the crypt one sees the exact spot. There stands an altar over which is inscribed the words, "Hic verbum caro factum est"; and a fragment of a column projecting from the ceiling into which it is built, called the Column of Mary, is said to be miraculously supported, and revered even by the Moslems. To complete all, the holy house was carried from hence to Loreto, in Italy, by angels. The Greeks also point out, in a church belonging to them, similar sites, where they affirm these events to have occurred, but we had scarcely patience for one, not to speak of visiting two. The workshop of Joseph is also localised near the Latin church.

I think these particulars are better simply stated and left without comment, except that the longer one travels the more one wonders why almost everything of importance happened

underground in those days. Everything commemorated by the erection of a church is always supposed to have occurred in what becomes a crypt. One gladly turns from these dark haunts to the enchanting beauties of nature.

Harvesting was in full swing when we were in Nazareth; in front of the tent was the rocky threshing-floor, to which the supercilious camels continually carried their great loads of wheat. The hills around us were green and clothed with olives, the little white houses nestling tranquilly in their midst; above, the sky was stainless. Unrest and unbelief are the inevitable heritage of the end of the nineteenth century, but surely in the bosom of the Nazarene hills repose may be found if anywhere, even if the soul cannot recover the beautiful faith of earlier years.

At half-past six A.M. we were on our way to Tiberias, through scenery very uninteresting, except that Mount Tabor was visible at different turns of the road. The village of Kefr Kenna answers to the Cana of the Bible, and accordingly in a miserable Greek church there may be seen two stone pots about five feet high, which they tell you

were used at the marriage feast when water was turned into wine. Truly a large draft on the bank of credulity! There is nothing else to detain one in the mud-built village, so passing the well where women were filling their earthen jars, and sheep and horses were drinking out of a carved sarcophagus, we crossed the broad plain of El Buttauf, and at mid-day enjoyed half-an-hour's much-needed sleep under the shade of some olive-trees.

During the afternoon's journey cultivation became more frequent on little plains between rugged hills; at last a magnificent view of the deep blue Lake of Galilee burst upon us, with the walled town of Tiberias on one shore, on the other the richly coloured mountains where lie Gadara and Gerasa, and beyond all the snowy crest of the majestic Hermon, ten thousand feet above in the sky. It is one of those views which make an impression for life.

The descent to Tiberias is steep and sudden, for the lake lies six hundred and eighty-two feet below the Mediterranean level; the fields as we approached the town were

covered with cucumbers in every stage of development, and the heat became intense. Karn Hattîn, according to Latin tradition the scene of the Sermon on the Mount, and therefore called the Mount of the Beatitudes, rises on the left-hand side. The summit is an extinct crater, partly worn away so as to leave the two conspicuous eminences called the Horns of Hattîn. We cannot tell with any certainty that the great sermon was delivered on this particular spot, but if not, it was preached somewhere near, and the immortal words may as well have rung out clear and true over the Sea of Galilee from this point as from any other.

We entered the Roman gate, fast going to destruction, and rode through the town, the inhabitants glaring at us with anything but goodwill, pitched our tent by the shore of the lake, and shortly after were bathing in its glassy waves. The banks here are covered with large pebbles; a road runs above them, then comes a small strip of arable land, and beyond a perpendicular rock honeycombed with tombs. We were very tired that night, but still maintained that a saddle

is not adapted for a pillow, or a rug on the bare earth a satisfactory substitute for a spring mattress.

Tiberias (El Tabariyeh) is a town of three thousand seven hundred inhabitants, mostly Jews. Nearly one-third of the population perished in the terrible earthquake of 1877. It is one of their four holy cities, partly because their great Rabbi Maimonides is buried there, and partly because they expect the Messiah to rise from the waters of the lake, whence He will proceed to Jerusalem to establish His kingdom. It is notably an unhealthy town, much shrunken within its limits. Formerly it must have been at least a mile and a half longer towards the south, as numerous remains of walls, towers, columns of granite, and even of marble, may be seen in this direction. A hot sulphureous spring here rises out of the earth and makes its way towards the lake; the baths are still used, especially by Jews, who resort to them in great numbers during the month of June.

The walls of Tiberias though much shaken are nearly intact; the town is entered through an old Roman gateway, and a Roman castle in ruins

still stands at the entrance. It presents the usual appearance of an Arab town ; that is, it has narrow streets lined with little white houses built of mud or stone, with few or no windows exteriorly, a souk where the tiny shops are shaded by ragged awnings stretched from side to side, and a white-domed mosque and a minaret. The town is renowned for its dirt and vermin ; the king of fleas is said by the Arabs to hold his court here. Close outside the walls is an extensive cemetery ; the European hospital, and some mission houses out of character with the rest of the buildings complete the description.

We hired a boat to go to Capernaum, or Tell Hum, as it is called. The boat was heavy, and the six rowers in their full drawers, turbans, and short jackets, with bare legs, the handsomest specimens of humanity an artist could hope to see. Standing up they sometimes sent the craft forward at a terrific rate, at others they would sit down and row gently, singing as they did so.

Capernaum consists now of a few, a very few, shapeless ruins, and even of these miserable remains the best have been lately removed ; however, a few stones larger than the rest still mark the situation of the synagogue in which

it is said Christ taught. A Latin monk, who once had charge of the Garden of Gethsemane, looks after the ruins, and is making a garden there. It is Latin property. He showed a large stone of black basalt with a little carving on it which had just been unearthed by the labourers, but Capernaum, "which was exalted to heaven, is thrust down to hell."

Along the banks of the lake grow groups of magnificent oleanders, at that season in full bloom, the rosy flowers rising above the blue of the water. Yellow and red mountains descend to the shores. We landed at the supposed sites of Chorazin and Bethsaida, where there is even less to be seen than at Capernaum. We remained many hours on the lake, though the thermometer marked 95°; a hot wind blowing at the time rendered the journey most exhausting.

The Lake of Galilee is thirteen miles long and six in breadth, the water is clear and sweet. It contains some very good fish, one of which, the *Chromis Simonis*, carries the young about in its mouth. We were shown one of these, and it seemed as if at least a hundred tiny fish already perfectly formed lay between its jaws.

CHAPTER XXII

TIBERIAS TO DAMASCUS

"'Twas in springtime—all was glowing,
Splendours burst upon my sight,
Round me flowers were sweetly blowing,
Birds were singing with delight."
—ARTHUR PATCHETT MARTIN.

SHORTLY after five one morning we passed round the shore of the lake to Mejdel amid almost tropical vegetation. Canes, vines, oleanders, palms, mulberry, and olive-trees were jostling each other in a wild struggle for space. Mejdel, a village composed of mud hovels and transparent cottages built of cane, is identical with Magdala, the birthplace of Mary Magdalene; the inhabitants are so dark as to be nearly black, and much lower in type than any I had hitherto seen in Palestine.

After crossing a small but fertile plain, intersected with tiny streams running to the lake, the road begins to ascend, the character of the country changes, and we traversed immense fields of lava. It requires but little imagination

to see in the Lake of Galilee the crater of a volcano, whence had issued these rocks and stones molten and seething in some unspeakable catastrophe. Looking back, the views of the immense lake were superb as we mounted higher and higher; it lay like a colossal aquamarine in the breast of its encircling mountains. Fine stretches of tableland where herds of splendid cattle were grazing succeeded this wild scenery. Porter mentions having ridden here for twenty miles through herds belonging to Arabs.

Farther on is a new Jewish colony, chiefly supported by the benevolence of Baron Rothschild. It suffered much at its commencement from the raids of the Bedouin, and even now fifty of the inhabitants are armed and enrolled to do duty at night as watchmen. Here we are on the watershed of the Jordan, and the distant lake gleaming in the sunshine is the Bahr Huleh, the Waters of Merom of the Scriptures.

Bedouin were encamped here in great numbers. It is odd that whenever they shift their dwelling-place they take their fowls with them, which are immediately at home like their mas-

ters as soon as the tent is pitched, the hens settling down at once to their domestic duties, the cocks crowing as is their wont. They may be seen quietly seated upon the family belongings on the camels, as they travel from place to place. Arab donkeys have a smart look about the head, from having had their ears tied together at the tips while they are young. Losing sight of their dark tents I next noticed some Roman remains, the ruins of a khân, and some fields of tobacco; shortly after seeing which we encamped beside a gentle stream, to sleep as usual to the music of the jackals and dogs, having been thirteen hours in the saddle.

I know I have given a very superficial description of our route; but profound studies of this most interesting country may be found in the exhaustive works of such men as Robinson, Warren, Porter, and Lynch, and it is only left me to record frankly the impressions of a wandering artist. I have no theory to support, no opinions to sustain, often just excuses for writing a book, and the religious raptures which fill many pages of some descriptions of the Holy Land seem to me out of place over eternally disputed sites.

Our party was on the way again at six, and this day's journey led through some of the grandest and most magnificent scenery in Syria. We leave Palestine at Dan, or the Hill of the Judges (Tel-el-Kadi), now nothing but an elongated mound with a Mohammedan saint's tomb under an oak at the top. Dan, as every one knows, was the northern boundary of the kingdom of the Israelites, as Beersheba was the southern, whence arose the expression "from Dan to Beersheba."

Passing Dan we entered a gorge, at the bottom of which a noisy stream of water rushed, shaded on either side by quantities of oleanders in full bloom; the black, uncanny-looking buffaloes of Syria were standing in a morass half covered by mud as is their wont, to escape the persecution of insects. We crossed the gorge over a well-preserved Roman bridge of five arches; the horses were very nervous at seeing no parapet.

A Roman road in ruins, the huge stones dislodged and tossed about as if by an earthquake, leads to some beautiful forest land covered with young shoots growing from old roots, for Arabs never allow trees to come to a decent

size before cutting them down. Soon Banias or Cæsarea Philippi, the most northern town reached by Jesus Christ, came in view. It would be difficult to match this scenery except perhaps in the Alps, and then there would be no oleanders with their rosy tints to light up the bottoms of the valleys.

Banias is so beautifully situated amid rocks and running water that it deservedly bears the name of the Syrian Tivoli. Roman walls, towers, a gateway and a bridge are still tolerably well preserved, while the strongly-built stone houses are also said to be of Roman construction. The old and massive gateway has an Arabic inscription, of course of much later date than the structure itself. On the roofs of their houses the inhabitants erect sheds of bamboo and straw to sleep in during the summer heat, which is very intense in these parts.

Banias is inhabited by Druses, people remarkable for their personal beauty and fine costume. "The early ages of Mohammedanism witnessed the most extraordinary religious fermentation; ancient heathen superstitions, misapprehended Greek philosophy, early Persian dualism, the theory of the transmigration of

souls, and even materialistic systems were combined to form a series of the most fantastic religions." One of these is the religion of the Druses. "They describe themselves as Unitarians. They believe in the existence of a God, inscrutable and indefinite, but who has occasionally manifested Himself in human form, His last incarnation having taken place in the person of Hakim. This Hakim, the last prophet, and the founder of the true religion, is said to have subjected himself to death only with a view to ascertain whether any of his followers embraced his doctrine from worldly motives. At a future day he will return, found a vast empire, and convert the whole world to the Druse religion. The Druses possess numerous religious writings. They perform their worship in solitary chapels called 'khalweh.'"[1]

The spring which is the principal source of the Jordan bursts forth from amid a mass of broken rocks at Banias, and tears down a gorge amid oleanders and other shrubs, a volume of pure, sweet water. Traces of a temple built by Herod in honour of Augustus may still be seen.

[1] Dr. Albert Socin.

We could get nothing eatable or drinkable here except "lebban," a kind of sour milk which it takes an education to appreciate, and Arab bread in thin sheets more like leather than anything else. We inquired in vain for meat, vegetables, wine, eggs, butter, or milk, and the question arose in my mind, on what do these people live? The answer seems to be leathery bread and onions, yet they are a fine, strong race.

The Arabs have an expression which is continually on their lips, "Mahlish." Are they disappointed, wounded, or does anything happen to displease them, they soon recover saying "mahlish." So they said to us now, "You are hungry and there is nothing to eat, 'mahlish.'" Do you come to a place where you reasonably expect to find water and there is none? "mahlish." The pieces of string which form the greater part of your horse's harness give way and you tumble off, "mahlish." I dare say when sentence of death is pronounced on culprits they only say "mahlish."

Constant warfare goes on in these regions between the Druses and Bedouin; the cause is usually that the Bedouin steal the young

Druse girls whenever they have an opportunity. The Druses from their different villages then unite to seek for the Bedouin ; when they find them severe fighting ensues, in which on one occasion so many as seven hundred men lost their lives. Indeed, Druse and Bedouin seldom meet without a combat, and either if occasion serve will murder a Turkish soldier for the sake of the cartridges in his belt.

The huge castle of Banias, which covers the highest mountain ridge, is the best preserved in Syria ; but the ascent, too steep to be made in any way but on foot, is most fatiguing. Some large chambers, vast cisterns, and portions of walls built of titanic stones still remain ; also some pointed archways, loopholes, and staircases all of fine workmanship. On little vacant places the Arabs have planted tobacco, and Nature has bestowed her richest verdure on the beautiful scene. The view from the castle is sublime, extending over Banias to Lake Huleh on the one side, and reaching down tremendous gorges so far as Mount Hermon on the other. The apparently inaccessible precipices, 600 to 650 feet in height, on which it is built, are a portion of the Hermon range.

A part of the sublimity of these vast views is the solemn quiet which prevails, no sound awakening to break the force of the impression; for silence is strength, and the thought of the clamour of war which often filled these same valleys with the horrors of death, lends emphasis to the empty stillness which now reigns in undisputed majesty.

The road hence leads over the Lesser Hermon at an elevation of five thousand feet above the sea-level, and is precipitous and stony in the extreme, the narrow pathway along which our horses walked one by one being sometimes almost blocked with loose masses of basalt. Here we were glad to see a flock of goats, and persuaded the shepherds to sell us a few pints of milk.

Thus strengthened, we reached at four o'clock in the afternoon the Druse village of Mejdel-esh-Shems, just outside which, surrounded by the handsome and curious natives, we pitched our tent. A young girl offered to run up Mount Hermon and bring us down some snow to cool our water with, but we said "mahlish." This night everything in the tent became saturated with dew, our bed, clothes, and boots, and to

this I attributed the very severe chill I got just then. We should not have encamped at this early hour had we not been informed that our next day's journey over Hermon was exceedingly dangerous, and that if we really meant to do it it was advisable at least to travel by daylight. Only lately a dragoman conducting a party had been whipped on that road by the Bedouin, besides which numerous murders and robberies had lately taken place. As it was, we took a whistling watchman to look after our camp during the night, but declined the escort offered for the next day, knowing that the Bedouin will sometimes get their friends to attack a party in order to prove how necessary it is to take others of them as a protection.

The road passes about three hundred feet below the summit of Mount Hermon, which is covered with stripes of snow looking like the skeleton of some huge saurian which had been bleaching there since the waters of the deluge left it high and dry. It leads over wild desolate passes, up one mountain and down another continually, with generally a swift running brook at the base, till it reaches a tract of barren land bounded by high hills on both sides, dangerous

because it is a sort of neutral ground where Bedouin dare scarcely come because of the Maronites and Druses; Maronites, because the Druses wish to cut the throats of every one of them they meet, and with them they have an eternal feud; and Druses, because the Maronites and Bedouin retaliate in kind. There are many ruined villages and khâns about here, every inhabitant of which has been murdered in one or other of these bloody frays, and none dare take up their abode within the still standing walls.

We were shortly accosted by an Arab, who rose as it were from behind a stone, and informed us that we were doing a most dangerous thing in going over that plain without an armed guard; that in fact it was impossible to get over safely; that of course it was no business of his, and he only spoke out of kindness to us, &c. &c. Thanking him for his interest in our welfare we went on, and with the exception of seeing a man or two rise up suddenly from amid the rocks, reconnoitre us, and then sink down again where no hiding-place seemed to exist, saw nothing to excite alarm. It is remarkable that we saw two men standing on a stone performing some rites which

a Freemason said resembled Masonic rites—these men were Druses. Every peasant in this district goes to his work with his gun slung across his back, and ploughs and delves with it still hanging there, and their belts are stuck full of knives, powder-horns, and pistols.

If he commits a murder, a man has only to reach a volcanic region in the Hauran called the Lejah to be in perfect safety. The inhabitants of this as yet unexplored district train their horses to run over the loose lava where none can follow them, and thousands of lives have already been lost in endeavouring to subdue these outlaws, but in vain. They willingly receive any one who will join them and obey their rules.

To-day we lunched under a luxuriant walnut-tree at Kefr Hawa, and it lends interest to the reminiscence of it that it has since been destroyed in the contest between the Druses and the Turks. As far as I could learn a few soldiers disguised as Bedouin stole the cattle belonging to the inhabitants. The whole of the male population naturally turned out to endeavour to recover their property, and during their absence the main body of Turkish soldiers entered the village, pillaged and burnt it. It

looked so calm, so peaceful to-day under the fair summer sun, so remote from all chance of change and strife, that it is difficult to realise all has since disappeared in the wild destruction of warfare. But it is truly said, "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword," and we must perforce forgive these half-savage tribes so long as we ourselves with our boasted civilisation can hit upon no better manner of settling our disputes.

It seemed as if the day's journey would never end, when at last from the tops of the apparently interminable barren hills we caught our first view of Damascus, its white houses nestling in a sea of trees rendered almost blue by distance. Many descriptions have been written of this view. I will only add to them that the plain on which the city lies is vast, the trees innumerable, and that Damascus seemed of great extent. We did not enter it this evening, but encamped under a walnut-tree in a cemetery at El Katâneh, having been nine and a half hours in the saddle. Everything in our tent became thoroughly wet that night also.

Damascus, "the head of Syria," which we reached at two o'clock the next day, is situated

in the midst of a vast stony plain whose scanty crops are unpleasing to the European eye, traversed by the great caravan road, on which long strings of heavily laden camels are continually coming and going. The huge town lies in the midst of luxuriant orchards and gardens, and everywhere is pure running water—a great contrast to all the towns we had hitherto seen. Indeed, the Arabs have a most exaggerated idea of its loveliness, so little are they accustomed to the beauty of trees and rivers. The Barada winds in and about it, supplying water for the numerous fountains which are the delight of its inhabitants. The Arabs call it "Esh Shems," the city of the sun, and well they may, for the heat even in February was intense, almost overpowering. We pitched our tent beside a stream.

In the "Holy Places of Syria" Damascus is thus truthfully described: "Houses, mosques, streets, all the work of man in fact, bear the marks of neglect and decay. The houses are shapeless piles of sun-dried bricks and wood, and sadly out of repair; the streets are crooked and narrow and filthy, paved with big rough stones, and half covered with ragged mats and

withered branches. Scores of miserable dogs lie in the dust, too lazy to bark or even crawl under the horses' feet. In little stalls like shelves along the sides of these lanes squat ranges of long-bearded, white-turbaned, sallow-visaged men telling their beads."

And Damascus, the city of Abraham, the city that was old when Greece and Rome were in their prime, was to me—it is difficult to make the confession—something of a disappointment. It can boast of no antiquities or fine modern buildings, its bazaars are not so good as those of Constantinople, and the other streets are merely lanes covered with rubbish and lined with mud walls of houses pierced by tiny doors.

Its chief charm is the seething Oriental life to be seen in the streets, the colour and variety of costume, the vivid presentment of that Eastern civilisation which is slowly but surely becoming a thing of the past. Turkish merchants dressed in long silk dresses and large turbans, wandering Bedouin from the desert in their keffiyehs and striped abbâs wearing that look of supreme indifference which is natural to them, tall thin Abyssinians with their calm, gentle expression

and finely-cut features, blustering soldiers in blue and orange with huge untidy boots, veiled women in flowing white drapery who look like ghosts amid the brilliant throng, Jews with long side-locks and narrow shoulders wearing European hats and shoes which completely spoil their otherwise becoming costume, sellers of sherbet with striped crimson aprons and brass vessels ornamented with flowers jingling two metal cups together in rhythmical measure, half naked attendants at the numerous baths running out to breathe the air, Pashas and rich Arabs on horses decked with tassels of many colours, camels profusely decorated as to the head and wearing mirrors on their knees, Armenians and Greeks in the beautiful costumes of their countries, scantily clothed native boys who run hither and thither amid the crowd, men wearing the green turban which shows they have been to Mecca, beggars clothed in patchwork coats in the most dilapidated condition, Jewesses arrayed with that lamentable want of waste which characterises them in the East—these and many other picturesque personages jostle one another in the narrow shady streets of Damascus.

There are miles of covered arcades, with tiny shops on either side, in which the proprietor sits cross-legged among his wares smoking his narghileh and drinking coffee, sleeping if it is mid-day, or saying his prayers if it is the hour for so doing. Everywhere running water is to be seen and heard; even in the shops there are fountains, and some of the cafés are built over streams so as to be always cool. We were all ill here, and I believe Damascus to be an unhealthy place: the intense heat of the sun pouring on the ever damp earth causes a kind of malarial fever.

The dogs in the streets, which are the only scavengers, cannot be frightened out of your path by threatenings with a stick, and they are too lazy to dodge a stone. The flies are so tenacious, that when they once settle you cannot drive them away, but must take hold of them and remove them bodily. Nature teems with life.

There is a fine mosque or two to be seen in Damascus, but we did not enter one of them.

We visited a Syrian girls' school. It was beautifully kept and managed, and they sang

hymns in Arabic very well, but what will be the future of these poor girls, unfitted for their natural course of life, without another to take refuge in?

The most charming part of Damascus is the interior of the houses of the richer classes. You enter a little door in a mud wall and find yourself in a courtyard or patio, in the centre of which a marble fountain throws its silvery water in the air; orange and lemon trees wave their branches laden with fruit and blossoms, oleanders throw their heavy perfume on the breeze, while arcades of marble columns wrought with delicate tracery make up a scene which seems almost ideal. But to look at these fairy palaces is an expensive matter, one or two medjidiehs at least must be given to the bow-wab or porter who shows them. After traversing for days the lava plateau between the Sea of Galilee and Damascus, where tall and awful masses of rock grow less and less till they sink into a stony plain also sterile and barren, with the thermometer at 100° or more, the traveller is in a state of mind if not to overvalue, at least to appreciate thoroughly the "city of the sun."

Here we heard news of the elaborately equipped party of Americans we had met at Jenin. They were nine in number, and had seven servants with them, yet they had been afraid to cross the pass under Hermon and had come by another route. They were much astonished we had done so in safety.

If they still make exquisite sherbet, lemonade, and Turkish delight at Damascus, the silk, leather, and steel manufacture has greatly deteriorated. He is lucky who finds a piece of real old silk, and luckier still who can buy one of the celebrated swords that may be bent almost double without breaking.

The great Saladin is buried in a handsome mausoleum, and the tomb of Noureddin may be seen by looking through a barred window in one of the bazaars; it is the usual catafalque covered with a shawl—a turban is placed at the head.

The street called "straight" is a long narrow thoroughfare, looking as if it had only come into existence a few years ago and was not yet finished. Projecting beams, windows without casements, unroofed houses, and ragged awnings are the characteristics of Oriental streets, and this is no exception.

The Damascenes are very fanatical, and in the Christian quarter, with its narrow crooked streets and plain mud houses, may still be seen traces of the horrible massacre of 1860, when in and around Damascus 14,000 Christians were murdered in cold blood. The Druses were the principal actors in this awful tragedy.

The beautiful mosque erected by the Khalif Weled was destroyed by fire three years ago; its ruins still stand in the centre of the town. "In making arrangements for this majestic pile, he cast his eyes on the superb church of St. John the Baptist which had been embellished by the Roman emperors during successive ages, and enriched with the bones and relics of saints and martyrs. He offered the Christians forty thousand dinars of gold for this lovely edifice; but they replied, gold was of no value in comparison with the sacred bones enshrined within its walls. The Khalif therefore took possession of the church on his own authority, and either demolished or altered it so as to suit his purpose in the construction of his mosque, and did not allow the Christian owners a

single dirhem of compensation. He employed twelve thousand workmen in this architectural enterprise, and one of his greatest regrets in his last moments was, that he should not live to see it completed."[1]

The inscription in Greek on one of the gates so often spoken of, "Thy Kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations," is a relic of the old Christian Church. The words "O Christ" are not found in the hundred and forty-fifth Psalm whence the quotation is taken.

[1] "Successors of Mahomet."

CHAPTER XXIII

DAMASCUS TO BAALBEK

"Cache ton projet, ta bourse, et ton chemin, dit le proverbe Arabe."

We left Damascus at half-past three one afternoon, our way lying through some very characteristic quarters of the city, where were people employed in the manufacture of saddle-bags (*hurj*), horse trappings, and a few other similar articles. It was terrifically hot, and a glance even into the open baths where fountains were splashing was refreshing; some boys, divested of every shred of clothing, rode their horses into the river, and seemed to be enjoying the cool water. The road then follows the course of the foaming Barada, the Pharpar of Scripture. The scenery is wild and grand in the extreme; precipitous rocks clothed with the most exuberant vegetation, sparkling waterfalls, and poplars, walnut, fig, orange, and lemon trees of enormous growth, with vines climbing to the top of the

very tallest of them and joining hands as it were from branch to branch, reminded me of the landscape in Northern Italy, where the Alps gradually sink down into the vast Lombard Plain. Luxuriant gardens and orchards surround some pretty little villas hereabouts, and the pleasant sound of flowing water never ceases. French engineers have just constructed a railway beside this road from Damascus to Beyrout. Italian workmen and a very few Arabs were employed. I am told the line runs through the midst of the remains of Zenobia's palace.

Suddenly the scenery changed. Leaving the pleasant shady gorge we plunged at once into the wide stony plain of Sahra, across which a perfectly straight road runs for nine miles. This road was made by a French company, as it has not yet entered in the Turks' heads that roads need making. For two long hours we followed it, and then reached a village consisting of two houses called Dimâs. We asked for a night's lodging at the khân, and were shown into a hut which served indifferently for animals and travellers, and where the bed was represented

by a bank of earth. For this accommodation a medjidieh was demanded. We declined the *tempting* offer, and pitched our little tent in the midst of a cornfield, which proved a comparatively clean if not comfortable resting-place.

At half-past six the next morning we began to jog again up one stony mountain and down another *ad infinitum*. The shepherds tending goats sometimes ran away frightened when we asked for milk, sometimes refused to sell it; at others did not know the value of the coins tendered in payment. This is the less curious, however, as the value of the current money varies in nearly every town. At eleven o'clock we came to long lanes lined with luxuriant hedges within which vines were growing; peasants were ploughing between them with a pair of tiny oxen yoked to a wooden plough, while women ran before to lift up the trailing branches for the team to pass under. We soon reached the large village of Ez Zebedaneh. Here we were most kindly received by the French engineers of the railway, who gave us curaçoa and jam to begin with, and afterwards dinner. How

delightful it felt to sit on a chair at a table again! for though creeping about in a tent and reading, writing, and eating in a squatting attitude may be very convenient for the apparently india-rubber legs of Orientals, it does not suit Europeans.

We found the village most interesting. The houses are built of stone and roofed with beams of poplar overlaid with earth, which is occasionally wetted and rolled; for this purpose a stone roller is kept on every roof. Over the doors and in the centre of the arched ceilings a crockery-ware plate is fixed by way of ornament. An old stone bridge crosses the stream which runs through the midst of the village; it possesses also the remains of two Roman towers, one of which is turned into a saint's tomb, the other serves as a minaret. The people are good-looking, their costume most picturesque. Six months ago they made an unsuccessful attempt to murder the Christian inhabitants, and the engineers had been obliged to barricade their little cottage and sleep with their revolvers handy.

Nearly every native is followed by a fat-tailed sheep decorated with beads, which runs

after him like a dog. These huge flat tails always struck me as being inconvenient for the poor beasts, something like the long train of a Court dress, *mais il faut souffrir pour être belle*, and perhaps this idea consoles them. We slept that night at a native mission house. The room contained absolutely nothing but a divan running round three sides of it, and two mattresses thrown on the floor; but this seemed luxury after our tent experience.

The astonishment of the natives of Ez Zebedaneh when they first saw the train steaming and puffing along knew no bounds. They said it was written in the Koran that the "Vapoor" could not come there. In Jerusalem also the railway provoked an immense amount of interest. At first the Arabs pulled up some of the rails, thinking they might prove useful at home; next they turned the road into a camel-drive, and could not be persuaded to take their animals out of the way till several were purposely run over and killed. On one occasion a man deliberately went to sleep on the rails, would not move when he heard the train coming, and was only saved from death by the train being

stopped. An Arab got out of his carriage once at a station, and not returning to his place in time, of course the train went on. He looked calmly after the departing carriages and shouted, "Wait a little for me, sir." They attribute the train to the agency of either Allah or Sheitan, they have not yet made up their minds to which; meantime it is to be hoped that a network of railways will soon spread over Syria as the best means of civilising what is still a savage country.

We left Ez Zebedaneh at half-past five in the morning, our path lying through a deep stony gorge. Our mukari or groom had provided himself with a narghileh at Damascus, and this he proudly smoked as he rode in various attitudes on his horse, when he was not asleep, singing, or reading; for he had brought a small book from Jerusalem, which he read aloud over and over again, and his songs were of that monotonous kind which can be pleasing only to Arab ears. Occasionally his or Mahomet's horse would fall, but that in no way disconcerted the riders, who invariably managed to come down on their feet. We would hear the noise of the fall, turn round, see the horse

prostrate, but the man standing quite unmoved beside him.

What tiresome people Arabs are to deal with! I doubt not but that they mean well, but they love money before all things, do not know truth from falsehood, and take thieving quite as a matter of course. However, they are gentle and kind, and invariably self-respecting and well-behaved.

We continued to follow our sombre ravine. Huge lizards ran and jumped from stone to stone, and finally perched on the highest they could find, looking with polite curiosity on the strange procession passing by. Here the scenery was enlivened by wild roses, white and pink; indeed, the wild flowers of Syria are wonderful for their beauty and variety. Every day we seemed to see a fresh species, but not to lose the old ones which had adorned our route from the beginning; a succession of beautiful blooms were ever beside us, wild pinks, hollyhocks, lilies, orchids, roses, verbenas, violets, in fact every possible flower except the commoner English ones.

This part of the route is again said to be dangerous to travellers, but we met with no interruption on our way.

We followed the gorge to the foot of a precipitous ascent, where the poor horses continually lost their footing, and we were in the utmost danger of falling off. After a fearful climb of an hour's duration the top was reached, and our toil and risk were amply repaid by the magnificent view which burst upon our sight. Far away in front stretched what seemed an immeasurable plain covered with the golden glories of the harvest. To it on either side descended the vast ranges of Lebanon and anti-Lebanon, coloured purple, red, orange, and green, and capped with sun-tinted snow. In the foreground stood a white Moslem village, with hedges of lemon and orange coloured roses growing wild. This plain is the Bakaa—that grand plain which gained for this part of Syria the name of Cœle-Syria—the hollow Syria. It is surely one of the very finest views on earth.

These are moments that count in a lifetime, when the soul seems to claim its fellowship with nature, and flying from the bitter contest which is existence, becomes one with the Spirit which palpitates through the whole creation, and rests like an infant cradled in its mother's arms.

We pursued our way again amid wild surroundings, till at four o'clock the six celebrated columns of Baalbek rose upon the sight, and shortly after the little village itself, nestling in its groves of poplar and walnut trees.

The Victoria Hotel where we stopped seemed a delicious haven of repose, and the Turkish landlord, in petticoats supplemented by a coat, was most kind. The tremendous ruins of the Acropolis of Baalbek are exactly opposite the hotel, and of a deep orange colour, standing proudly against the rich blue sky and many-tinted slopes of Lebanon. My malediction and that of every true artist on the Turks who have planted trees thickly round the grand old ruins! They were meant by their builders to stand above the vast broad plain, dominating everything as is their right; now one has to pick them out from amid the crude green of ordinary forest trees. Almost as bad, you pay a medjidieh per head to enter them, and when you find that, notwithstanding, not a hand is ever raised to save these unique and colossal remains from impending decay, you bitterly grudge the vexatious tax. A number of granite

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columns have been taken away to build a mosque, which is now also in ruins; only the old columns survive in their second attempt at existence, just as there is more life still in the oldest remains of Greece and Rome than in all our modern erections.

I commenced the next day by making a sketch of the columns from a distance, though the weather was cold and windy; afterwards we started to explore the ruins. They are entered through long subterranean passages of massive masonry, many of the stones being twenty-five feet long and the walls seven feet thick, probably of Phœnician workmanship. Emerging from the semi-gloom we were utterly bewildered by the size, extent, and magnificent colour of the columns and walls which rose in profusion around us. We first entered the glorious Temple of the Sun; Baalbek was called Heliopolis, or the City of the Sun.

The remains are better preserved than I expected. Traversing the ruined portico we examined the noble portal of most marvellous beauty. The doorposts are monoliths, lavishly adorned with sculptured garlands. The central stone of the lintel has unfortunately subsided,

and is propped by modern masonry. The decoration of the whole is unsurpassed in richness and magnificence, to which its deep yellow colour lends additional effect. Nowhere have I seen a more glorious specimen of this style of architecture.

The walls of the cella, which is seventy-eight feet long and seventy-two feet broad, have niches for statues in two rows, one above another, amid excessively rich ornamentation. The brilliant Syrian sun pouring upon it causes here and there patches of dazzling yellow light, warm shadows, and reflections thrown from wall to wall almost orange in their glowing hues. Opposite the entrance is the raised sanctuary once used as a Christian church, whence two staircases descend to subterranean vaults. On either side of the doorway is a staircase by which it is possible to mount to the top of the Temple and enjoy a most extensive view of the other ruins, the plain, and the surrounding mountains.

On both sides of the cella are rows of splendid Corinthian columns forty-seven and a half feet in height, supporting a lofty entablature, which is connected with the cella by a coffered ceiling

most elaborately designed, and which consists of hexagons and triangles, the intervening spaces being filled with medallions, well executed, of emperors, &c. Above are the remains of the barbarous erections of the Arabs, who turned this noble building into a fortress. All seemed to me in a most insecure state, as if the next severe tempest or the slightest shock of earthquake might tear apart many of the trembling stones. But mere words are useless to give an idea of this glorious ruin—architectural phrases convey but little to the ordinary mind, measurements are only characters on paper, and even a poet's description must fall far short of the noble reality—the Temple of the Sun at Baalbek must be seen to be understood, and seen too in the flood of sunshine in which it was built to be seen.

Next to it is a Saracenic building with a beautiful porch; deep recesses pierced with loopholes point to its having been used as a place of defence; it is still tolerably perfect.

On the north side of the Temple of the Sun stand the six tremendous columns, which are the most conspicuous objects in Baalbek, and which are the only remains of the world-renowned

Temple of Jupiter. In their awe-inspiring presence it is difficult to descend to measurement. After seeing them, one reads in the guide-book that they are sixty feet in height and seven and a half feet in diameter; they are of the Corinthian order of architecture, and still retain their architraves. In the early morning or the evening light these gigantic columns appear like gold in the deep blue sky. Their bases are deeply undermined; a generation will soon arise who will not see their glory, as we do not see the Temple of which they formed a part when it was a perfect whole.

There are other remains here (among them some elegant niches) which formed part of the entrance court. The enclosing wall is another marvel of architectural construction; one of the huge columns of the Temple of the Sun has fallen against it in some convulsion of nature, and is neither disjointed nor has it broken the structure. Built into this Cyclopean wall are three stones, the most colossal ever used in building; the largest is sixty-four feet in length and thirteen feet in height and thickness. How they were quarried and placed in their present position nineteen feet above the level of the

ground is a mystery which may perhaps never be solved. In a quarry near Baalbek lies another stone like them, hewn but not yet separated from its mother-rock; it is seventy-one feet in length, and weighs, according to calculations, one thousand five hundred tons. How such blocks were transported in ancient times it is now impossible to guess, and will probably remain unknown unless some picture or inscription not yet discovered shall one day reveal the mystery.

In this Acropolis we have a combination of Phœnician, Græco-Roman, and Saracenic architecture. The last appears like an excrescence on the other two, which blend most intimately. How much have not these fanatical Moslems to answer for who made a fortress of Baalbek, and have to-day a powder magazine in Jerusalem in the one undisputed remains of the City of Zion—the Tower of David!

A little octagonal temple stands on the plain about a mile from Baalbek. It looks like an Arab construction of stones of different periods; some of the granite columns have traces of capitals, others have none.

The hill to the north of the ruins is completely

honeycombed with tombs, rifled of their contents long ages ago. There is a large one under the house in which we sat to paint, deeply hewn in the solid rock, containing places for twelve bodies, two side by side. Another is used as a storing place for jars of oil. In all are niches in the rock for lamps.

Some of the natives speak a little English, and these learned individuals delighted in airing their knowledge before their fellow-countrymen. They interviewed us in this wise: "Good morning, madam! How is your health to-day?" On receiving an answer they would continue in insinuating tones, "What country are you? Where do you come from? Where are you going? Is that lady your sister? Is that gentleman your husband? Have you any children?" In asking the last question, the word "weled," boy, is employed, as a girl, "bint," does not count for anything here. They attempted to sell pieces of granite as relics of the ruins, which are built of fine limestone; and bead purses with chaste designs of six magenta columns, and triangular camels worked thereon; also canes made from the cedar-trees of Lebanon, which are never allowed to be touched.

Baalbek is quite a civilised place. It has a post-office, and one can buy ices. On Sundays the inhabitants turn out in dazzling costumes; pink, emerald green, and purple were among the shades worn. Unfortunately, as is generally the case in Christian communities, the women had no distinctive dress. The principal promenade is a willow-shaded avenue, which leads to a beautiful pure spring enclosed in a basin. There is plenty of running water in Baalbek.

The quarries are well worthy of examination. In them still remain many stones already cut into grooves for the insertion of the wooden wedges, which, when saturated with water, would rend them from the rock. The size of these blocks exceeds imagination. The gardens of Baalbek are fertile and lovely, but not so poetical and Oriental-looking as those of Damascus. An inhabitant of Baalbek would, it seems, raise a potato for his *pot-au-feu*, where a Damascene would grow a rose-bud to offer to his mistress.

Baalbek was the culminating point of our journey, and we grudged no suffering or fatigue necessary to see one of the wonders of the world, which many generations more will not see, if Turkey is to continue to misrule Syria

and suffer some of the grandest remains of antiquity to be wantonly destroyed. The remains of the Roman Forum by far exceed in interest these vast ruins, the Temple of Minerva at Athens is far more perfect in architecture, but neither of those tremendous relics of the past exceed in grandeur and sublimity the lordly monarchs of the Syrian plain.

The contrast between the Syrians and Jews is very marked. The former are a handsome, strong, clean, and industrious race, who could do much to shake off the abhorred Turkish yoke *si sua bona norint.* Upright and manly, well dressed and cared for, they tread their native land as if it belonged to them; while the mean and shifty Jews, idle and cunning, creep about in the streets of Judæa as if they apologised for their existence, and dare scarcely call their gabardines their own.

CHAPTER XXIV

BAALBEK TO JAFFA

"The long day's toil is over, we must rest."

Six o'clock the next morning saw us passing over some well-cultivated plains, where the reapers were using double reaping-hooks shaped like an italic *f*, but one limb longer than the other. The crested larks allowed us to approach them very nearly, and sang tunefully in the corn. The people looked remarkably clean and industrious, strong and well made, and were chiefly occupied in the cultivation of silk-worms and mulberry-trees. On both sides of us the ranges of Lebanon and anti-Lebanon sank, robed in purple and red, into the yellow harvest fields.

We followed the carriage road, and stopped at mid-day at El Kasahâla, a village entirely devoted to the silk industry. The inhabitants are very dark, and to our surprise some spoke a little English, having learnt a few words at

the Chicago Exhibition. In harmony, they have begun to leave off their own picturesque costume, to put a common English coat over their long robes, and to wear boots and stockings like the young Turkish party in Jerusalem. The tarbûsh, ugliest of headgear if we except a chimney-pot hat, they always retain.

A dangerous bit of road (I mean from robbers) lies between here and Shtora. Threats were muttered about stealing our horses, but we rode close together and went on. At Shtora, a very pretty village, the cultivation of the grape and manufacture of wine has made great progress of late years. The wine would be good if it were not fortified with arrack.

Danger or no danger, by seven o'clock we were too tired to go on as the road over the plain had been exchanged for some time for a pretty steep ascent; so we encamped by the wayside, notwithstanding sundry cautions as to the peril of so doing, and to put it as mildly as possible, the suspicious looks of the people around us. The new railway, a single line only, runs across the spur of Lebanon just here.

Descending the mountains next morning

through uninteresting scenery we soon saw Beyrout in the far distance, a red and purple mass against the deep blue of the Mediterranean. For many miles before we reached the town the road passed between gardens rich in palms, white oleanders, pines, mulberry, fig, apricot, and olive trees, nature bursting into a laugh, as it were, after frowning so long in the rugged Lebanon.

Under a thick grove of pines we once more rested, and afterwards rode on to our hotel, very proud to see the English fleet anchored in the bay, which was the only thing fatigue allowed me to notice that evening.

Beyrout is called the "Paris of Syria," and indeed it has the appearance of a busy, prosperous, fashionable place. It owes its importance to being the port for Damascus. The buildings are larger and more solidly made than those of the Syrian capital; the dresses of some of the inhabitants, the men especially, are particularly rich, of brocaded silk or satin, and often white or cream-coloured. They ride magnificent horses, caparisoned with rich-coloured trappings hanging down to the ground. The caparisons of the carefully groomed donkeys are also worthy

of notice. It is remarkable all through Syria that most Arabs prefer to ride with only a halter for bridle, and are indifferent as to stirrups.

The bazaars are very quaint, and well worth a visit. Some fine houses of the Crusading period are still to be found in Beyrout, and there is a good old church with three round apses, the interior of which cannot be inspected, as it is now used as a mosque.

The sea-bathing at Beyrout is excellent, and I noticed that many of the native women can swim. The climate is much better than that of Jerusalem or Baalbek, but it is usual for the inhabitants to retire to the villages in the Lebanon during the summer heat.

We drove about the suburbs, and much admired the situation of the town and beauty of its surrounding scenery. The white houses lying round the blue bay of St. George, the tawny and red sand, dark fir plantations, exquisite gardens, with, in the distance, the snowy range of Lebanon, make up a picture not easily surpassed, and which, though Beyrout can boast of no antiquities, will always have an attraction for travellers.

A fair was literally and metaphorically in full swing while we were there; to the melancholy sounds of the unfailing drum girls and youths were swinging high in the air, and occasionally indulging in those nauseous sweets and seeds which are the staple refreshments at every Oriental festival. At night watchmen armed with long sticks make their appearance, or sit in little watch-boxes at the corners of the streets, whistling occasionally to their fellows.

One day at five o'clock in the afternoon we left Beyrout by a sandy road shaded with pines; soon the scene changed to prosperous-looking villages situated amid gardens, in which palms, olives, and bananas flourished. What a contrast to the stony hills of Palestine! Then we came down to the sea beach, and rode on till the sun set redly in the Mediterranean and the full moon rose over the mountains of Lebanon. Still we rode on, passing dry torrents full of oleander shrubs in full bloom, till we came to an inlet of the sea too wide and too deep to be crossed in that uncertain light, so shortly after nine we encamped upon its banks. Nowhere was the route very desolate, a khân or a silk manufactory occurring every now and then.

About noon the next day, after riding partly on the sandy beach and partly over stony mountain ridges, we saw Sidon in the distance. The town is beautifully situated on a small promontory, at the point of which is a fine old castle united to the mainland by a noble Roman bridge of eight arches. Our road on the beach was strewn with pieces of old columns and fragments of masonry—the rocks had been in many places artificially levelled—and traces of the old Phœnician civilisation lay on every side. About three o'clock we encamped on the beach.

Behind the tent was a garden filled with lemon trees, and it was curious to see the women peeping out of the gate when only women were to be seen, and suddenly shutting it so soon as a man came in sight. They invited us into their garden, and, sitting on the ground scantily dressed in full drawers, short jackets, and veils, offered us lemons; their eyebrows were painted right across the top of the nose, and their feet and hands stained in curious geometrical patterns.

Sidon (Saida) is one of the most picturesque of towns; the inhabitants are scrupulously clean personally, seem to work, and have a prosperous

appearance. It is surrounded by gardens well cultivated and kept. Behind the town are a number of rock-tombs, one very much like another. A low doorway, in which there are holes for the hinges of a door, leads to a chamber below the present surface of the soil having side niches for the reception of the sarcophagi. Some have been cemented and whitewashed. Here was found the sarcophagus of Alexander the Great, now at Constantinople.

The people were busily employed in threshing. The corn is placed on the stone threshing-floor; over it oxen, donkeys, or horses draw a sledge round and round, on which the driver, generally a woman, stands. The threshing-sledge is about five feet long and three feet broad, made of wood, and turned up in front; its under surface is studded with knobs of iron or stone. The goad used by the driver is ten feet in length. We mounted a sledge and were drawn round several times; it would not have been an unpleasant experience if the sun had not poured down on us with such unmitigated fury, and if there had not been so much dust.

On leaving Sidon we came to a very rough Roman road; no chariots could have passed over

it as it is, so probably in the old days it was covered with a coating of earth. All the way the sea was visible on one side, sometimes dancing and rippling close beside us. We lunched at a khân—I mean, ate our own provisions, for nothing is to be had at these places but water, and perhaps coffee, and reached Tyre (Sûr) at five o'clock.

We went to the house of a Greek priest, as there is none but an Arab hotel here, and were kindly received, but astonished the natives by asking for a table to eat off. Some uneatable meat was roasted, and thirty pairs of eyes gazed on us during the meal. We asked for salt, and a handful was put down on the table ; the natives seemed to be saying to themselves, "The requirements of these Frangi are so luxurious!" When we rose from the table they sat down in our places to see how it felt. It may be asked, But how do the Greek priests manage? The answer is, that the majority of them are natives who do not know the meaning of the words they use at their services, can neither read nor write, and of course retain their Arab customs.

As at Ez Zebedaneh, the sleeping-rooms contained nothing except divans and mattresses, but

we were glad to rest in them under any circumstances.

The only antique remains I saw in Tyre were an altar, and a sarcophagus used as a drinking-trough for cattle. The inhabitants seemed dirty, indolent, and miserable in contrast with the busy, clean population of Sidon. Like them they delight in sticking flowers in their turbans.

"The streets are miserable and the houses dilapidated," says Bädeker, "and the modern town of Sûr contains few attractions," and he is, as usual right. Of its ancient glories it is superfluous to speak:—the capital of Phœnicia, the home of Hiram the friend of Solomon, visited by Christ, the defier of the great Saladin—it only succumbed when the whole of the Eastern and part of the Western world fell under the dominion of the Saracens in the first flush of their irresistible fanaticism.

The road on leaving Tyre runs beside a magnificent beach, indented here and there with little harbours. The rocks seem in many places to have been cut down to the level of the sea, possibly to build bathing-houses or wharves on. We passed Ras-el-Abyad, a mound of projecting rock descending in a precipice 200 feet

high, to the sea; the light reflected back from the surface of the white soil is blinding. Then we crossed the steep rock called Ras-en-Nakura, the ancient Scala Tyriorum, the only road from the south now as in ancient times. The poor horses slipped and tumbled across the almost giddy height; the old Roman road at the base was scarcely less rough. We camped in sight of Akka (St. Jean d'Acre), looking beautiful and fairylike in the sunny bay with its background of Mount Carmel.

All along this coast nothing that Europeans are accustomed to sustain life on is to be procured, and they are entirely dependent on the provisions they carry with them. About Akka figs, melons, olives, vines, and cactuses abound; also there is much barley, as Orientals are accustomed to feed their horses almost exclusively on it; though wild oats are plentiful in Syria, they are never cultivated.

A great part of the fine aqueduct constructed by Jerzar Pasha still stretches across the fertile plain, reduced, as it nears the city, by time to one or two solitary masses of masonry.

The exterior of Akka with the fortifications built by the Crusaders and its deeply-indented

blue bay is beautiful indeed, but the interior is sordid and gloomy. It has a double gate, and its defences are still kept up. In passing through the streets you go under many small archways which at intervals cross the narrow slippery streets. The Souk is uninteresting to Europeans.

The people are most fanatical. A boy who had guided us through the streets wanted more backsheesh than our men thought he deserved, and he pursued them out of the town, throwing stones, threatening them, and cursing their fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, horses, horses' fathers and mothers, and their grandfathers and grandmothers too. Being able to bear this no longer our guide suddenly rode up to him, presenting his pipe as if it were a pistol, with the result that the boy ran screaming with fright into the sea, whence he emerged after a long interval considerably cooler.

We crossed the Nahr Namân, or river Belus, with some difficulty, the water being above the horses' flanks, and rode for miles along a smooth sandy beach, where, according to Pliny, glass was first made. The current of that "ancient river, the river Kishon," is very dan-

gerous in winter, and many lives are lost there annually; on the beach near are the skeletons of several vessels sticking out of the sand, the poor remains of strength and beauty. From here is a good view of Haifa, which, though situated amid palm-trees, seemed modern-looking and hot. We reached it at three o'clock.

It is astonishing that Arabs have no idea of time, and as all distances are measured by time, often awkward. We once asked a man how far it was to a certain village? "An hour," he replied, and we rode three without coming to it. Half-way from Akka we asked how far it was to Haifa. "Seven and a half," he answered, that being the time allowed for the whole distance.

We ascended Mount Carmel, and took up our temporary abode in the fine hotel just built on its summit.

There is nothing to detain the traveller in Haifa, but Mount Carmel possesses an interest all its own. Its beauty is much extolled in the Bible, and Pythagoras came from Egypt here. It is needless to add that it was the scene of Elijah's victory over the prophets of

Baal, and whence he saw the "little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand," "and the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." Even now storms commence in this region as the Prophet describes.

The descent of Mount Carmel is steep and dangerous for horses, in England it would be considered impossible. A sweet smell of herbs breathed around us as we trod, and in the distance a young gazelle was bounding amid the shrubs. Mount Carmel is said to possess a very rich flora. In its sides may be seen caves by the dozen once inhabited by hermits; here a little society seems to have had its caves together, there one more morose than the rest would inhabit some solitary hole which could only be entered by a rope let down from above—a sure method of keeping out casual callers—while another, of a luxurious turn of mind, had piled up some loose stones as a shelter from the wind. There must have been a whole army of them here if all the caves were inhabited. I once saw one of the species in the rocks of Gebel Abufaydah on the Nile. He had nothing on save a pair of drawers, and was lying basking in the sun; he got

up and went into his den as the steamer approached.

A good view is to be obtained shortly after leaving Carmel of the grim ruins of Athlit, the Castellum Peregrinorum of the Crusaders. We passed along a cultivated plain which lies between the mountains and the sea. On the mountains nestle numerous little villages with square houses, by the sea lie rocks and ruins intermingled. Everywhere the peasants, dressed in the gayest of colours, seemed barbarous and uncouth, unlike the polished Syrians. They are said to be dangerous people, but they were busily employed in threshing with horses which they drove round and round the threshing-floor, and took but little notice of our cavalcade. We persuaded them to sell us milk, and rested at mid-day under one of the fine carob-trees, of which many are to be found in this district.

We slept that night at Baron Rothschild's Jewish agricultural colony of Summarîn. The little white cottages with their gardens look pretty and clean externally, but we learned from experience that they are the reverse within. Plenty of vines have been planted

here, but the general complaint is that too much native labour is employed.

Summarîn is beautifully situated amid hills; in Palestine one realises that the Bible expression "a thousand hills," which in England seems an exaggeration, falls short of the reality. Hill after hill succeeds as far as the eye can reach, and that is very far in this clear atmosphere. About here the Arabs cultivate acre after acre of pumpkins and watermelons, and they may be seen sitting in little huts made of branches guarding the fruit lest it be stolen. Here and there the master with an umbrella over his head was seen watching the fellaheen at work in the sun.

We found a delightful camping ground at El Kaisarîyeh among cactuses at the foot of the ruins of a mediæval tower, where the German Emperor afterwards pitched his tents. Our little tent beneath the large cactus leaves stretched like protecting hands over it, the tall melancholy ruin above, on one side the horses picketed in a line and the groom who always slept beside them, on the other Mahomet lighting the fire for the evening meal surrounded by Arabs in every variety of attitude, all brilliant with the

light of the setting sun, made a pleasant picture.

A few dilapidated ruins and the tiny village peopled by emigrants from Herzegovina now represent Cæsarea Palestina, once the splendid city of Herod the Great, and the most important town in Palestine. St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. Philip often visited it. Here was found the magnificent vase of green crystal supposed to have been used in administering the sacrament, and known in poetry as "The Holy Grail." More fortunate than Sir Galahad we know its whereabouts, which is the cathedral at Genoa.

> "The cup, the cup itself from which our Lord
> Drank at the last sad supper with His own,
> This, from the blessed land of Aromat—
> After the day of darkness when the dead
> Went wandering o'er Moriah, the good saint
> Arimathæan Joseph journeying brought
> To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
> Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord.
> And there awhile it bode, and if a man
> Could see or touch it he was healed at once
> By faith of all his ills. But then the times
> Grew to such evil that the holy cup
> Was caught away to Heaven and disappeared."

However unsuccessful the Crusaders may have been in attaining their chief object, they have left numerous monuments of themselves in Palestine; the mind, tortured and wearied with perpetual contradictions as to the traditional sites of Biblical places, gladly takes refuge in the contemplation of the more trustworthy relics of their exploits.

The journey of the day after was over the broad treeless plain of Sharon, on which the sun poured unmitigated heat. Strings of camels passed us, in one case sixty were marshalled by a highly decorated and superb beast covered with woollen tassels and little looking-glasses, whereby his natural expression of disdain was so increased, that with haughty eye and hanging lip he seemed to consider the earth not worthy to be trodden on. Numerous flocks and herds were scattered about, and it looked as if, with proper cultivation, this plain might produce enough corn to supply all Palestine.

On the top of a hill a Corinthian capital was placed, stuck with blue beads, rags, broken pottery, &c., probably a kind of shrine like

the trees and bushes one often meets covered with shreds of rags.[1] Here we killed a grey snake three feet long. Snakes and vipers are far from uncommon in the Holy Land; during the cutting of the harvest the reapers are sometimes stung; they die in a quarter of an hour, their bodies swelling to an enormous size. The wind now blew hot in addition to the scorching of the sun, and we were glad to take shelter for lunch under a spreading fig-tree. We shared this grateful shade with an old lady, smoking in a wooden pipe tobacco from a supply kept tied up in the corner of her veil. She seemed to be a personage of some importance, for the neighbours who shortly arrived to inspect us kissed her hands. The effect of this perpetual sunshine is to cause the natives to screw up their eyes to keep out the light; the muscles of the cheeks become shortened in so doing, drawing with them the upper

[1] "Trees are regarded with reverence, and spirits are supposed to reside in branches. Hardy must be the Arab peasant who would dare to pass one of the lone trees under which a saint is buried without adding his mite to the woollen shreds. So also in England where pilgrimages are made to holy wells."—Sir C. WARREN.

lip, across the centre of which a horizontal line appears and the teeth are shown. All the fellaheen have the same expression even when children, caused in this manner.

The wind continued hot, the sun burning, the white earth reflected back the quivering rays of heat—our very eyeballs burnt in their sockets. Coloured glasses were of no avail, for the glass soon got hotter even than the surrounding atmosphere. Over and over again during that long journey over a sun-scorched plain I repeated to myself the poem which if it is not Gordon's is worthy to have been, "The Sick Stockrider":

"The deep blue skies wax dusky, and the tall green trees grow dim,
The sward beneath me seems to sink and fall;
And sickly, smoky shadows through the sleepy sunlight swim,
And on the very sun's face weave their pall."

At four o'clock after crossing the Nahr-el-Aujeh (the largest river in Palestine except the Jordan) by a bridge, we entered the German colony of Sarona, and so came to Jaffa, which I have previously described, whence the

remainder of the journey to Jerusalem was made by rail.

When I look at a beautiful picture, a noble statue, or hear a delicious melody, I reflect not so much on the pleasure they impart to me as on the delight their makers must have felt, as the painting grew under the artist's hand, the figure emerged from the marble beneath the sculptor's chisel, the air breathed from the violin at the musician's touch—in fact, on that greatest of ecstacies, the sense of creation, an ecstacy shared with God Himself. This creative faculty is irrepressible and indestructible; so for ever artists will continue to produce works which the world will never see, musicians to compose oratorios which will never be heard, poets to write epics which will never be read. But these have their reward, not the reward of gold or fame, but that far greater one bestowed by this sense of creation. So with the writer of a trivial book like this; no one will have the pleasure in reading it the writer has had in writing.

There are two ways of representing an object or scene, and two only. First, the

rapid sketch or record of the impression received, necessarily broad and simple; secondly, the highly-polished work in which all the details have been long and elaborately studied. The first is the style in which I have endeavoured to reproduce my impressions of the Holy Land and Syria, and I offer in this little work my own observations only, "made on the spot."

JERUSALEM BY MOONLIGHT

FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

THE full moon rose o'er Anathoth,
And gleamed upon the lone Dead Sea,
Threw silver spears o'er Olivet,
And touched each hoary rock and tree.

In solemn darkness Kedron lay;
But all the wealth of light was poured
Fondly upon Jerusalem,
The ancient city of the Lord.

As ivory her houses gleamed
Against the blue of hill and sky,
And all her slender towers arose
Like shafts of silver thrown on high.

The sun-bright stars drew back absorbed
  In radiance, as morning dreams
Melt in the truthful light of day—
  Merged that which is in that which seems.

No sound profaned the holy scene
  Save the sad jackal's plaintive wail;
No light of lamp, no ray of star,
  Disturbed the shadows blue and pale.

And just so looked Jerusalem
  To Him who, on the self-same spot,
Would long ago have sheltered her
  Beneath His wing, but she would not.

So she remains unchanged and lone,
  Till He shall come again and fold
In the vast pity of His love
  Creeds, nations, empires, worlds untold.

MARGARET THOMAS.

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Bldg. 400, Richmond Field Station
University of California
Richmond, CA 94804-4698

ALL BOOKS MAY BE RECALLED AFTER 7 DAYS

- 2-month loans may be renewed by calling (510) 642-6753
- 1-year loans may be recharged by bringing books to NRLF
- Renewals and recharges may be made 4 days prior to due date.

DUE AS STAMPED BELOW

SEP 08 1998

12,000 (11/95)

FORM NO. DD6, 60m, 1/83 BERKELEY, CA 94720

YD 09660

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES
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